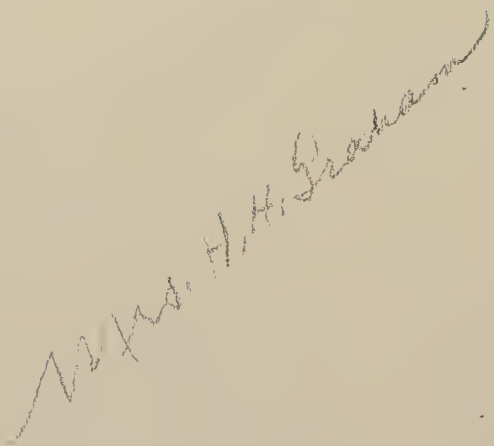

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THE CULMINATION OF MODERN HISTORY

BY

RAMSAY MUIR

PROFESSOR OF MODERN HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

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TO

A. L. SMITH

MASTER OF BALLIOL

WITH

CORDIAL HOMAGE

PREFACE

THE purpose of this little book is to trace in broad outline the development of two of the most powerful factors in modern history, both of which appear to have reached a culminating point in the Great War. These two factors are the nationalist and the internationalist movements. So far as I am aware, no attempt to survey the history of either as a whole has yet been made in English; still less have both been dealt with in conjunction. Yet the two movements are intimately related. On the surface they appear to be mutually hostile. But they are not really so. It is only on the basis of triumphant nationalism, as the great Napoleon saw a hundred years ago, that an effective internationalism can be realised. It is only by means of an organised international system that the rights, and even the existence, of the weaker nationalities can be protected. The history of the two movements, when read in conjunction, very powerfully enforces these conclusions.

As the book was originally written it dealt also with two other great factors in modern history, the growth of self-government in Europe, and the ex

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pansion of the dominion or influence of the European peoples over the world. The two essays dealing with these themes are omitted because they would have swollen the volume unduly; if circumstances permit, they may appear in a subsequent volume. The short introductory essay was designed as an introduction to the complete series, but I have left it unaltered.

It is no part of my aim to play the part of a prophet, or to put forward vast constructive schemes for the future. Maps of a new Europe according to the national principle, and schemes of international organisation, have been published in abundance since the war began. I do not feel competent for such gigantic tasks; indeed, I am conscious of a certain presumption even in the more modest task which I have essayed, of presenting in a short compass and in a clear general view the essential historical data which are necessary to enable the ordinary citizen to approach with intelligence the consideration of these vast problems.

I have to thank my friends and colleagues, Miss B. A. Lees and Professor Tout, for reading the book in manuscript or proof.

R. M.

The University,
Manchester,
May, 1916.

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NATIONALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

PREAMBLE

AMID the horror and carnage of the Great War, unparalleled in the annals of humanity, the only consolation open to intelligent men is to keep their minds fixed upon the magnitude of the issues over which the conflict rages. When that is realised, not even this ocean of suffering seems too high a price for humanity to pay; for it becomes more plain, the more one ponders the matter, that we are at one of the most august and decisive turning points in the history of the world. To-day a complex of vital issues, far deeper than any of the immediate provoking causes of the war, far more momentous than even the fate of this great nation or that, awaits solution; and it is being decided whether the civilisation of Europe, which has now become the civilisation of the world, shall continue to advance in the directions which, in spite of many waverings or retardations, it has followed ever since what we call western civilisation was born; or whether it shall be diverted into paths of development fundamentally the same as those which led the other great civilisations of the

world, each in turn, after a brilliant efflorescence, to stagnation and decay.

Babylonia, Egypt, India, China, Mexico, and Peru—each of these has produced a remarkable civilisation ; each has passed into limbo, or into ineffectiveness, because, however remarkable its material, or even its intellectual, achievements, it lacked the vital principles which have made western civilisation perennially progressive, various, living, and strong. What are these vital principles of western civilisation, which have placed in its hands the destinies of the world ? In what forms are they to-day being fought out ? To these questions the following essay tries to provide some sort of answer.

I

THE MAIN PRINCIPLES OF WESTERN CIVILISATION

I

LAW AND LIBERTY

TWO principles form the essence of western civilisation, and provide the main distinction between it and all the other civilisations which have preceded it, and have sometimes appeared to overshadow it.

The first of these principles is the belief in Law as something that ought to be obeyed not merely because it represents the arbitrary will of a master, human or divine, who has the power to punish its infraction, but because it represents in some real measure the organised will and conscience of the community, and because obedience is ultimately for the benefit both of the community and of the individual.

Once Law has come to be regarded in this way by a community, several consequences follow, which are always to be perceived at work, however obscurely and imperfectly, in every society of the western type, and which have seldom or never been operative (so far as our records can tell us) in

the other types of civilisation which have existed on this planet.

The first of these consequences is that since Law is to be regarded not merely as the Will of the Strongest, but as an attempt to approximate to the rule of abstract justice, it is felt to be, not a fixed and unalterable thing, but something that grows and changes, and ought to go on growing and changing until it attains a perfect harmony with the highest moral inspirations of men. In Oriental societies, whether the body of law be derived from the mere edicts of conquerors, or be regarded as dictated by the will of the gods or of Allah or of Jahweh, each jot and tittle of it is commonly held to be sacred, just because it is the decree of power ; to be obligatory not because it is just but merely because the power which decrees it is irresistible ; to be unchangeable except at the will of its author, which must mean little more than whim where the author is a human master, and must be unpredictable and difficult to recognise or determine where the author is supposed to be divine.

Nor is this true only of Oriental societies. In all the primitive societies of the western peoples, also, until they came under the direct or indirect influence of Greece and Rome, this conception of Law, as something imposed by an external will, to be obeyed merely because it must be obeyed, and not because it is just, is to be found in operation. The primitive customs of the Germanic tribes were regarded as sacred because they came from their ancestors, who had them from the gods. When

the freemen at the folk-courts (whose contribution to the growth of liberty has been absurdly exaggerated) declared the "custom of the folk," what they really laid down was a set of often meaningless and irrational formulæ, which had to be employed because custom dictated them; and it is among the Northmen of Iceland that we hear of a man so learned in the law that he alone knew the magic, unalterable, ancestral formulæ by which his own crimes could be tried, and therefore went unpunished. Such a conception is absolutely antithetical to the conception of Law as an approximation to justice and to Right Reason, which has come to be one of the vital principles of western civilisation.

A second consequence which flows from the idea of Law as not arbitrary and imposed by authority, but rational and capable of improvement, is that where this conception is accepted, Law is seen to be the child of Morality, not Morality the offspring of Law. Law, where it is progressive, as in the western societies, is always, with more or less success, striving to adapt itself to the varying and growing demands of public morality; but always limps slowly and painfully behind, since it can only embody the "greatest common measure" of the moral sense of a community, not the loftiest conceptions of its finest minds. Law is like a cumbrous engine of government, following behind the pioneers to organise and garrison new realms of moral obligation for humanity. When once this idea is grasped, however incompletely, when once it is seen that Law owes its validity mainly to the fact

that it attempts to express the moral sense, it becomes plain that the obligation to obey it, though enforced by the police, is not due to that enforcement, but is ultimately the same as the obligation which requires obedience to demands not enforced by the police at all. To an honourable man, a promise is as binding as a contract; that is to say, moral obligation is not limited by the sphere of law. It applies with equal potency to spheres which law has not yet conquered or organised, such as the sphere of inter-state relationship. And the assertion that there is no obligation of international morality because there is no international law enforcible by an inter-state police, with its implication that law derives its validity from force, is seen to be essentially a denial of the very conception of Law which is the vital principle of western civilisation. The conception of the ultimate necessity of an international law is the logical product of the western conception of the nature of law in itself. The Romans, who mainly contributed to establish our idea of Law in the world, had some sense of this also, as they showed by their attempt to work out, in practice as well as theory, a *jus gentium* or law of all peoples.

A third consequence of the western view of Law is that since it exists not merely as the arbitrary will of a higher power, but for the common advantage and the common protection of all, it is the duty of every man to co-operate in its enforcement. It is not a blind power to be placated or evaded, but a common interest to be protected and maintained. Cases may and do arise, of course, in which

the demands of law may seem to the individual to be hostile to the higher requirements of his own conscience ; and in these cases there emerges that bracing conflict of obligations out of which progress comes. Yet these cases are sufficiently rare not to invalidate the generalisation that, in the western view, no people can be called fully civilised until there is widely diffused among its members the sense of their obligation, not merely to obey the Law, but to obey it willingly and to co-operate in enforcing and maintaining it. Perhaps one of the most striking contrasts between the peoples who have fully absorbed the ideas of western civilisation, and those who have not, is the comparative weakness of this sense of obligation among the latter. In India, for example, it appears that, among a large proportion of the population, this sense of obligation scarcely yet exists. Habituated through tens of centuries to obey merely because they must, and to think of courts of law as mere expressions of the arbitrary will of the master, they are still, in many grades of society, prone to think of the Law as something that it is legitimate to evade whenever it is possible ; there is a temptation to admire, rather than to reprobate, those who have skill in evading it ; and when a man finds himself in the courts he still too often thinks of his case as a trial of wits, and, whether he be in the right or in the wrong, fabricates evidence without hesitation or scruple. To obey the law of the state has not yet become, for such a man, a moral obligation, because he does not yet instinctively feel that the maintenance of the law is a common interest ;

but obedience to the sometimes quite formal and irrational demands of his religion *is* a moral obligation, because it is required by the gods. For him, therefore, Law is not the offspring of morality, drawing its ultimate sanction from the moral obligation ; but, on the contrary, morality is the child of Law, and consists in keeping square with the behests of authority ; and since a breach of these behests is a more dangerous thing, and also more difficult to conceal, in the case of the orders of the gods than in the case of the orders of men, his religious duties, however formal, have more sacredness for him than his civic or legal duties. That is one of the deepest contrasts between the eastern and the western mind.

A fourth consequence of the western view of Law is that since Law is the concern of all, and should be continually modified in order to bring it into accord with the moral sense of the community, the whole community, or at any rate the wisest members of it, ought to have a hand in making the Law. Accordingly in all the western communities, in a greater or less degree, there have been demands for, and experiments in, the co-operation of the communities in the making of Law, and therefore in the conduct of government. There have been, of course, the widest differences as to whether this co-operation is indeed advantageous, and as to how it can best be put into effect. But in the world of western civilisation the argument for or against various forms of law-making machinery has nearly always turned on the question how the best and most reasonable laws can be made ; even

the apologists of despotism—for example, the advocates of the benevolent autocracy of the eighteenth century—have most often based their argument on the claim that the Enlightened Monarch can better assure the triumph of Right Reason in Law than the ignorant crowd, or a prejudiced class. In communities which have not fallen under the influence of western civilisation, neither the claim for a common share in the making of laws, nor even the arguments by which the repudiation of that claim has been justified in the West, have ever made themselves heard. And this is natural; because only the West has ever conceived of Law as being anything other than the arbitrary will of authority.

This, then, is the first distinctive note of western civilisation: that Law exists for the benefit of the community, and not merely for the benefit or by the will of a superior authority; that it is an attempt to embody the precepts of morality, and is therefore not the source of morality; that it is a growing and changing thing; that its ultimate sanction is the same as the sanction of other moral obligations, namely, the enlarging conscience of mankind; that it is the first duty of the good citizen not merely to obey but to help in enforcing the law; and that because the law embodies the common conscience and also the common interest, there are *prima facie* reasons why the community should co-operate in the making as well as in the enforcement of law.

The second distinctive conception of western civilisation is the belief in Liberty as one of the

ultimately desirable things, and the highest glory of manhood. Because Liberty is a living spirit, and not a dead formula, it evades exact definition, and the struggle to attain it has taken infinitely variable and often mutually inconsistent forms. But the assertion of it always rests implicitly in the claim of an inherent right, residing in the individual or in the group, to be guided by its own inner light in making the most of its life, its opportunities, and its powers of thought. Liberty of conscience, or the right to govern one's actions by one's highest moral conceptions, undeterred by vexatious restrictions of law, custom, or opinion; liberty of thought, or the right to follow fearlessly the guidance of reason without respect to the conventions or prejudices of the herd, even though they be embodied in law; political liberty, or the right to be free from the dictation of arbitrary authority, and the right to share in the making of the laws:—these are the supreme demands which the spirit of Liberty makes.

Now it is obvious that the claims of Law and Liberty, those twin presiding goddesses of western civilisation, must often come in conflict: indeed, the unending conflict between them is the heart and essence of western history, and has given it its vitality and significance, for it is the strife after Liberty that keeps Law alive and progressive, as the western mind demands that it should be; and it is the restraint of Law that prevents the eager claim for Liberty from ending in mere chaos. In all ages and all countries of the West, this strife is and has been unending, and men are divided

everywhere by temperament into the worshippers of Law, who are conservatives, and the worshippers of Liberty, who are liberals.

Nevertheless the two are interdependent; Law in the western sense cannot exist without some degree of liberty, and Liberty cannot exist except under the protection and support of Law. This interdependence of Law and Liberty has indeed always been a clearly realised conception in the communities which have accepted western civilisation.

In a real sense it may be said that liberty has never truly existed outside of the realms of western civilisation.

Where law is only the arbitrary will of a master, freedom of thought and freedom of conscience can be permitted only in so far as they do not endanger his interests, and if they exist at all, exist only on sufferance; where law is regarded as simply the unexplained and unchangeable will of the Divine Power, neither freedom of conscience nor freedom of thought can be tolerated. Often, indeed, a despot state has allowed a large degree of actual liberty to its subjects, because it was too stupid or too indifferent to interfere with them, as the Turks left their Christian subjects free to follow their own faith. But in such cases, even divine liberty can produce little fruit; and this because it does not rest upon and is not supported by Law, but exists only by virtue of a contemptuous indifference. Liberty must be positive, not merely negative; and thrives better upon active hostility than upon mere neglect. As for political liberty, that is a

conception utterly inconsistent with any but the western idea of the meaning of Law; and therefore the dream and vision of political liberty has never even dawned upon any of the peoples of the world until they have come into contact with western civilisation. So it can in a real sense be said with truth that the idea of Liberty is as exclusively and peculiarly the possession of the western world as the western idea of Law; and that no western society has ever played a part in history in which the conception of Liberty has not co-existed with the conception of Law. Law and Liberty, these two, the one the bones and sinews, the other the blood and glowing flesh and senses, are the body of western civilisation. And out of the union and interaction of these two arises the possibility of Progress; which, as a permanent state, is only maintained by the health-giving conflict of these two vital principles.

II

THE THREE ERAS OF WESTERN CIVILISATION

It is possible to distinguish three great eras or phases in the history of western civilisation: the third is perhaps now coming to an end, and a new era is perhaps being born, in the travail of the Great War.

In the first era, which we call Ancient History, western civilisation had its birth and first development, and the place of its birth was Greece. For Greece invented the ideal of human liberty. Among

her thinkers real intellectual liberty obtained its first full opportunity, and produced results so glorious that their morning splendours seem to outshine all the achievements of later ages. In the tiny seed-plots of her little city-states, political liberty also blossomed forth in such a variety of forms, such a prolific abundance of experiment, that their history has remained a treasure-house of political experience for all time. And this was because, under the inspiration of intellectual liberty, the thinkers and statesmen of Greece first worked out the western theory of Law as a rational thing whose aim was the embodiment of the moral sense of men, and shook themselves free both of the arbitrary dictates of despots, and of the equally deadening sway of custom and tradition. Nowhere in western literature will you find a more limpidly clear exposition of the fundamental difference between the western idea of Law, and that of all other civilisations, than in the *Republic* of Plato. In that immortal dialogue, which may be called, so far as regards this theme, the very Bible of western civilisation, Glaucon, Adeimantus, and Thrasymachus are the exponents of the doctrine held by the greater part of the world, that Law is only the Will of the Strongest, and that the essence of the state is Power. Socrates is the prophet of the essential western conception that the essence of the state is Justice, that Law is an approximation, more or less perfect, to the demands of justice, and that the aim of the state ought to be to give the fullest and most appropriate development to the powers of each of its members. Despite the extreme rigidity

of Plato's scheme for securing this perfect development of all men's powers, which would in fact have amounted to a denial of liberty, here is a proclamation of the very ideal which underlies every claim of the spirit of liberty. And mark that for Plato it is only by a system of Law in perfect accord with the demands of Justice, or the moral sense of men, that the opportunity for the full development of all the citizens' faculties, which is the purpose of Liberty, can be secured. Here, therefore, is also proclaimed the interdependence of law and liberty.

But although Greece was the birthplace of western civilisation, her tiny city-states were too weak to give it the security under which it could take root ; the very brilliance of their life meant that the flames were burning too fiercely, and died down almost as swiftly as they had burst forth ; and the Greek conviction that there was an impassable gulf between Hellas and the barbarism of the outer world formed an obstacle in the way of the expansion of the pregnant new conceptions of Law and Liberty. When Greek influence was expanded over the east under the Macedonian kings, it was only the products of the Greek culture, not its inner spirit, that were spread abroad. Had it depended upon the Greeks alone, western civilisation might not long have survived its brilliant childhood. But the slower and more prosaic genius of Rome took on the task. With the Romans the western conception of law was not the product of theory but of practical experience. Starting with the universal primitive idea of the Law as a sacred inheritance, belonging only to those who were of the Blood (the

Patricians)—a divine, irrational mystery given by the gods of the clan—they burst the shackles of this idea, from which the most of humanity never escaped, when they were faced with the necessity of embodying patricians and plebeians in the same organic state ; and having thus begun the rational adaptation of their Laws to circumstances, they pursued this course with extraordinary success, and gradually wrought out a system of Law so flexible that it was easily applicable to the needs of all the societies which were incorporated in the Roman Empire, and so manifestly just and reasonable that it was readily accepted by them. Its flexibility was due mainly to the fact that during the period of growth the Romans permitted a large degree of local autonomy to their subjects, and tolerated great variations of local usage and custom. But this is only another way of saying that Liberty was allowed to exist under the protection of Law ; and it was this Liberty, this variety of type, which accounted for the progressive and intelligent character of Roman government. Thus the Romans were able to include within the realm of western civilisation the whole of the Mediterranean lands.

Just when this process was completed, the Christian religion appeared. Born among an eastern people, Christianity was destined to be the religion of western civilisation, because it incorporated in its very essence the conceptions of rational law, and of liberty dependent upon law. "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" : here, in the very words of Christ Himself, is the western idea that Law must justify

itself to Reason, the western repudiation of the validity of any mandate that rests merely upon the assertion of authority. "Thy service is perfect freedom": here is the clearest possible affirmation of the interdependence of Law and Liberty—the assertion that willing obedience to the highest law we can recognise is the only sure path to Liberty. Hence there was an inherent affinity between Christianity and western civilisation; and hence the new religion easily conquered all the lands in which that civilisation was rooted, but failed to establish itself elsewhere.

For a space of four hundred years Rome gave peace and unity to the whole civilised world, such as it had never enjoyed before, and has never enjoyed since. But almost from the moment of its establishment, the Roman dominion began to decay. And the reason for this was, mainly, that Law got the upper hand of Liberty, and that the variety of types of life out of which progress comes was progressively overcome by the pressure of a too efficient, too logical, dominating *Kultur*. There were, of course, many other contributing causes of the decline of the Roman Empire; but the root cause was that the life-giving balance and conflict between Law and Liberty were more and more lost as the centralised power of the Emperors and their officials increased.

With the downfall of the Empire before the inrush of the barbarians in the fifth century of the Christian era, the first or Mediterranean age of the history of western civilisation came to an end; and for a time it seemed that the essential ideas to

which Greeks and Romans had given birth were lost to humanity. For amid the welter of German barbarism there was neither Law nor Liberty any longer. The conception of Law among these savages was simply the universal primitive conception of a body of customs that must be obeyed because it was imposed by aneestral usage, or by the mandate of the gods ; their conception of Liberty meant no more than the right to work their will upon their neighbours or subjeets. But the memory of Rome and its laws was too august and too deeply rooted to perish. During the Dark Ages, down to the eleventh century, the essential ideas of western eivilisation were kept alive, even if only in a rudimentary form, by the Chureh. Its influenee impressed upon even the barbarians the idea that there is a moral law higher than mere physieal might, a moral law whose spiritual sanctions are in the long run more powerful than those of brute force, and are not impaired by the temporary victories of force. Still more, the influence of the Church impressed upon Europe a eonviction of the essential and indestructible unity of western civilisation, a unity due to its common inheritance of the traditions of Rome, and its common belief in the doctrines of a religion which had embedded in it (however much obscured) the idea of the interdependence of law and liberty. Europe clung with touching obstinacy to this belief in the unity of eivilisation, and its eommon subjeetion to the same moral laws : the belief was embodied partly in the pallid shadow of the Holy Roman Empire, but far more effectively in the spiritual supremacy of the

Papacy. And the Church gradually conquered for the civilisation of the west, by the preaching of its missionaries, wider and wider realms; so that, by the end of the Middle Age, its bounds had been extended till they covered practically the whole area of Europe, and peoples whom the Romans had never touched—the Scandinavians, the central Germans, the western Slavs, the Hungarians, were brought indirectly under the influence of old Rome, and made sharers in the inheritance of western civilisation.

From the eleventh century, once the Church had begun to get the better of what one of themselves described as "the untamable barbarism" of the Germans, there began a many-sided revival, mainly under the protection of the Church, sometimes in revolt against it, but always stimulated by the ideas which it preached. Roman law was rediscovered, and began directly or indirectly to affect the legal system of every European state. Universities sprang into existence, and (within the possible limits) free speculation revived. Anselm and Abelard, Roger Bacon and Marsiglio began to recover for humanity the sovereignty of Reason. The very inefficiency of barbarian rule gave opportunity for fruitful developments. Feudal magnates combined to restrict the power of their king, and turned his *Curia* into a sort of legislative body. Groups of traders bought for themselves the privilege of managing their own commercial affairs, and even developed remarkable federations of towns, like the Hanseatic League. Everywhere in the absence of efficient and masterful control, "communities"

began to form themselves, for the protection of their special "liberties" under the guardianship of their special laws. But above all, within the vast vague entity of the *Christiana respublica*, regions whose populations were linked together by natural affinities of race, language, or custom, began to think of themselves as nations. Dimly and incompletely, that which we have come to recognise as the natural and obvious organisation of Europe, its division into a number of contrasted nation-states, each cultivating its own peculiar form of the common European civilisation, began to emerge. This new political unit of the nation-state was in some ways the most remarkable political invention of the Middle Ages, and it is a form unknown in any earlier age of human history, and is in reality peculiar to Europe. Its value was that it gave to the state a stronger basis of unity and patriotism than had existed since the days of the little city-states. Its seeming defect was that it greatly weakened the sentiment of the unity of civilisation; the rise of the nation-state meant the final ruin of the dream of a world-state.

It was in the first instance round the person and power of a king that the sentiment of the nation-state crystallised; and accordingly the growth of nation-states was generally identified with the growth of despotism. And this was most notably the case in France, the land which in a higher degree than any other formed the seed-plot of ideas in the Middle Ages.

A despotic monarchy could give to the people whom it ruled the inestimable boon of a firmly

administered and rational system of Law; and since this system of law was coloured, in a state organised on a national basis, by the national tradition and temperament, it could win for itself general acceptance and loyal submission in a degree impossible where the national sentiment was absent. But in a despotically governed state the influence of Law's twin-sister Liberty must be greatly impaired, and there was only one sense in which it could be said that Liberty was strengthened in such a community as that of France in the later Middle Ages: it secured free existence for the modes of thought and life characteristic of its people. Yet this was a real contribution to liberty; and in this way the rise of the nation-states meant that within the unity of western civilisation, under the shelter of national laws, a real variety of modes of life and thought was maintained, such as might keep progress alive, and prevent that deadening uniformity which had led to stagnation in the Roman Empire. Even despotic monarchies, therefore, when they ruled over nation-states, did in some degree contribute to the advance of Liberty as well as of Law.

But there was one happy land where, even amid the turbulence of the Middle Age, both Law and Liberty in a more generous sense got themselves established. This happy land was England, whose encircling seas saved her from the continual pressure of external foes, and enabled her to develop her own institutions freely. For that reason she was the first of European nations to achieve full consciousness of her nationhood, and to win for her

system of law and government that general and loyal assent on the part of her citizens which only the national spirit can fully secure. The sovereignty of a just and equal law may be said to have been established in England by the Norman and early Angevin kings; and the happy use which these princes made of the ancient institution of the shire-court, and their still more happy invention of the jury, meant that from a very early date the people of England were called in to co-operate in the maintenance of the laws, and even in the shaping of them, to a degree unknown in the greater part of Europe for centuries to come. Still more important, the vital principle of the Rule of Law—the principle that it is only by process of law that any man's life, liberty, or property may rightfully be touched, which is the very foundation of political liberty—was defined in England at a remarkably early date, and with a clearness perhaps unparalleled in all the earlier history of western civilisation. The famous clause of Magna Charta in which this principle was laid down no doubt means a good deal less than it seems to mean on the surface. But with whatever limitations, it does amount to an assertion of the Rule of Law. And soon there arose the custom whereby every Englishman who found himself attacked by arbitrary authority had the right, and was generally able to use it, of applying for a writ of *habeas corpus* requiring his gaoler to produce the body of his prisoner, and show cause why he was held in duress. More than that, during the next two centuries there grew up in England the rudiments of a genuine parliamentary system,

a genuine mode of consulting the nation regarding the laws by which it was governed ; and even in some degree of enabling it to control the conduct of national government by controlling taxation. And, finally, in England the machinery of the shire-courts and the many-sided activities of the Justices of the Peace called into co-operation, even in the daily conduct of executive government, a large and important element in the population. Alone among the European peoples the English had become in some degree self-governing before the Middle Ages closed ; and in the sphere of local government this continued to be so, even when, under the Tudors, a semi-despotic system took over control of the sphere of national government.

When the second great period of western civilisation drew to its close, therefore, towards the end of the fifteenth century, rational law had re-established its sway over the greater part of Europe, and under the shelter of nation-states that variety of type, which is the source of Liberty, was well-established. Rational Law, and Liberty protected by law, existed in Europe, not completely indeed, but more securely than in any other quarter of the world ; and practically the whole of Europe was bound together by a sense of the possession of a common heritage of civilisation and of morals. And in one of the new nation-states the Rule of Law had been established ; the habit and instinct of loyalty to the law was implanted among its people ; and on these foundations the fabric of organised Liberty had begun to rise. For these reasons this happy nation was to be, in the third and greatest age of the

history of western civilisation, the main guardian and representative of the most fundamental ideas of that civilisation, though neither she herself nor her rivals were yet able to perceive this.

The third, and the most momentous, age of western civilisation occupies the last four centuries, beginning towards the close of the fifteenth century. It is marked by four main features.

In the first place, the system of nation-states, worked out in practice in a few instances during the later Middle Ages, underwent a steady development, until in the nineteenth century it came to be accepted almost as an axiom that nationality is the only sound and healthy basis for the organisation of a state. When the era closed, in the Great War of 1914, only a comparatively small area of Europe had failed to achieve nationhood, and all the peoples within this area were passionately moved by the desire to achieve it. The Great War, in one aspect, appears as the last struggle of the forces of resistance to the national principle in Europe.

In the second place, the old sense of the unity of western civilisation, inherited from the Roman Empire and kept alive during the Middle Ages by the Roman Church, seemed to be destroyed at first by the Reformation and by the political theories of the Renascence. But it did not die ; and one of the most striking features of the modern age has been the almost unceasing struggle to find some new mode of expressing the essential unity of western civilisation that would not be inconsistent with the freedom and independence of the nation-states. To the old dream of the world-state suc-

ceeded the more practicable dream of international co-operation ; and the movement to which we may give the name of Internationalism grew steadily stronger throughout these four centuries, until it seemed to be in sight of its triumph with the summons of The Hague conferences in the closing years of the nineteenth century. Essentially this movement was a demand for the establishment and enforcement of a body of International Law on a secure basis ; a demand for the extension of the fundamental western conception of rational law conceived in the common interest from the sphere of the state to the sphere of inter-state relationship. It was a demand also for the secure establishment of Liberty among states ; for in this sphere, as in the relations of individuals, Liberty and Law are interdependent ; the weak state can only be secure of its liberty under the guardianship of law. In this aspect, again, the Great War appears as the last struggle of the forces hostile to the spirit of western civilisation : the forces that repudiate the possibility of international law, deny the claims of weak states to the liberty that law alone can give them, decline to admit the moral basis of Law, and claim the right to return to the practices of the jungle in inter-state relations.

The third marked feature of the modern age has been the growth of political liberty, and under its shelter the growth also of liberty of conscience and liberty of thought in all the nations of the west. It had seemed, in the later years of this era, that the principles of self-government, and of the full co-operation of the community in the making of the

laws which govern it, were within sight of their final triumph in all the nations of the West. But it appeared that these principles had yet to undergo their final ordeal; and in this aspect the Great War appears as the last struggle of the forces hostile to democratic self-government.

Lastly, as the Middle Age saw the expansion of western civilisation over the whole of Europe, so the Modern Age has seen its rapid conquest of the whole globe. This process began with the great explorations of the fifteenth century. It reached its completion with the westernising of Japan, the opening of China, and the partition among the European states of Africa, and the other backward regions of the world. When the Great War opened, there was scarcely a square mile of territory on the face of the globe which had not passed under the dominion of western civilisation. What has made this remarkable achievement possible is the political superiority of western civilisation, which is due to its two governing ideas of rational Law and Liberty. For that reason it has been natural that the nation which more than any other has taken Law and Liberty for its political guides, and more than any other has grasped the interdependence of these two, should have taken the leading part in this great process. But now that Europe has become the mistress of the world, the question still remains to be settled whether her dominion is to be exercised in accordance with the principles of Law and Liberty, or whether it is to be used in dependence upon the naked assertion of brute force, imposing upon subject peoples the Will of the Stronger

purely for the advantage of the Stronger. Beyond a doubt, the destinies of the outer world, as well as those of Europe herself, are being fought out in the Great War. And in this aspect the Great War is the final struggle of forces that would drive back the civilisation of the West, now that it has achieved its victory, to the level of the old and dead civilisations of the past. It will determine whether, for the non-European world, the empire of Europe is to mean Law, and Liberty founded on law, which means life and progress ; or whether it is to mean only dominion, and the forcible imposition of an iron *kultur*, which means, in the long run, stagnation and death.

If this be a true statement of the great issues that have been slowly developing during the modern age, and if it be true that these issues are to-day reaching their culmination, then the struggle is indeed the most august, as well as the most destructive, in which men have ever engaged. And it will be worth while to analyse in more detail, as we propose to do in the following chapters, the significance and development of these issues.

II

NATIONALISM

I

THE MEANING OF NATIONALITY

THE idea of nationality has come to be, for most Europeans, so much of an axiom, so much a part of our ordinary mental furniture, that we are apt to take for granted that every nation, just because it is a nation, has an inherent right to be united and to be free. Yet this idea is an extremely modern one. It may safely be said that before the period of the French Revolution no statesman, and no political thinker, had ever enunciated such a doctrine, or would have admitted its validity if it had been propounded to him. Indeed, as a political axiom, even among the western European peoples, it scarcely goes back so far as the French Revolution, but owes its ascendancy rather to Mazzini, and to the great nationalist movements which engrossed the attention of Europe from 1830 to 1870. Even to-day it is by no means universally accepted. Lord Acton, a deeply read historian and a sincere liberal, regarded it as a dangerous and misleading formula, incapable of exact definition. There are many sincere idealists

who hold that the nationalist passion has been the greatest of obstacles to mutual understanding and sympathy among peoples, and the most fruitful provoking cause of war; they regret bitterly that this false ideal should have been conjured up (as they think) by visionaries and fanatics, because they see in it the chief barrier to the realisation of the brotherhood of man, and to the creation of that world-state by whose establishment alone, as they believe, the reign of peace can be finally instituted upon earth. And we must admit that the nationalist doctrine has given rise to a great deal of mischievously loose political thinking, which is due for the most part to inexactitude in the use of the word 'nation.'

What do we mean by a nation? It is obviously not the same thing as a race, and not the same thing as a state. It may be provisionally defined as a body of people who feel themselves to be naturally linked together by certain affinities which are so strong and real for them that they can live happily together, are dissatisfied when disunited, and cannot tolerate subjection to peoples who do not share these ties.

But what are the ties of affinity which are necessary to constitute a nation? The occupation of a defined geographical area with a character of its own is often assumed to be one; and undoubtedly the most clearly marked nations have commonly enjoyed a geographical unity, and have often owed their nationhood in part to this fact, and to the love of the soil on which they have been bred, and of its characteristic landscapes. But geographical

unity is by no means essential to nationhood. It is possible to imagine a nation widely scattered, like the Greeks, over areas of very different characters, and yet retaining a strong sense of its unity. And in actual fact the limits of some of the most clearly marked nationalities are by no means plainly indicated by natural features of the soil. The Poles, for example—one of the most persistent and passionate of European nationalities—occupy an area which has no clearly defined geographical limits on any side; and the line of geographical division between French and German lands seems for the most part almost purely accidental. On the other hand, the real geographical unity which belongs to the Hungarian plain, with its ring of encircling mountains and its single great river system, has not availed to create a national unity. Geographical unity may help to make a nation, but it is not indispensable, nor is it the main source of nationhood.

Again, unity of race is often supposed to be an essential, perhaps the one essential, element in nationhood. Yet there is no nation in the world that is not of mixed race; and there has never been a race (Teutonic, Slavonic, Celtic, or the like) which has succeeded in including all its members within a single national entity. Some degree of racial unity is, indeed, almost indispensable for nationhood: but it is enough that the various elements in the nation should have forgotten their divergent origins, and that there should be no sharply drawn cleavage between them. In other words, racial mixture is not hostile to the growth

of a national spirit, so long as the races are merged, and there is free intercourse, by intermarriage and otherwise, between them. What is fatal to the upgrowth of a sense of nationality is that one of the constituent races should cherish a conviction of its own superiority, and that this conviction should be embodied in law or custom. The mixed races of Hungary might have developed into a nation if the Magyars had not from the beginning held themselves aloof from their Slavonic and Rumanian subjects, and treated them as inferiors. And the greatest obstacle to the growth of real nationhood in India is the rigid caste-system, whereby the Aryan conquerors have succeeded through many centuries in preventing themselves from being merged with the mass of their subjects.

It is indeed highly important that the two ideas of the race and the nation should be kept distinct; for undue emphasis upon the racial element in nationality has produced many unhappy results. "Racialism" (that is, the belief in the inherent superiority of one race over another, and in the fundamental antipathy between races) much more than "nationalism" has been the enemy of peace, and those who speak of the national spirit as the source of war are generally thinking of the racial rather than the national idea. What turned the national movement in Germany into a curse and a danger to Europe was that, owing mainly to the race-idolatry of German historians and philologists, it was turned from a national into a racial movement. It was made to rest upon the assertion of the inherent superiority of the Teutonic race to all

others. This mischievous and dangerous nonsense, for which there is no justification either in physiology or anthropology or history, reached its apogee of fantastic megalomania in the pompous pseudo-scientific absurdities of the renegade Houston Stewart Chamberlain, whose influence was very powerful in Germany on the eve of the Great War. But it can be traced from him through the German scholars of the nineteenth century, back to the Grimms and their school ; and the influence of this pestilent racial doctrine, foisted upon the greater part of Europe by the prestige of German learning, is to be seen very markedly even in the work of our own historians, Freeman, Stubbs, Green, and indeed the whole of their generation. Racialism has led in Germany to the demands of the Pan-Germans, who claim that it is their right and duty to bring under German sway all lands which have been at any time occupied or conquered by the Teutonic race, or in which any Teutonic language is spoken, irrespective of the fact that large sections of these areas, such as Holland, Denmark, and Belgium, have developed a distinct national tradition and sentiment of their own. Racialism rests upon an utterly unscientific basis : it assumes purity of race where it demonstrably does not exist ; it asserts the existence of permanent and unalterable divergences between the racial types of the various European peoples, in spite of their close kinship, and in spite of the obvious fact that the differences between them are in a far higher degree due to climatic conditions and to variations in social custom and institutions, than to skull-formation or

other ethnical varieties. Racialism, with its assertion of the existence of fundamental antipathies between races, and of the inherent superiority of one race to another, is the very antithesis of nationalism ; for the national principle begins by recognising that nations may be, and commonly are, formed from a blend of many races, and maintains only that whenever a coherent body of people have developed, by dwelling together, ties of affinity which make it easy for them to understand one another, they have a right to enjoy their own modes of life in freedom.

A third factor in nationality, which is far more important than race, is unity of language. Unquestionably unity of language is a binding force of the utmost importance, more especially because the colour and quality of a language largely determine the colour and quality of the thought of those who use it. It is often assumed that language is in itself merely a proof or indication of race ; the racialist theories of the Germans are largely based upon this assumption, and the racial maps of which they are so fond are not really racial maps at all, but linguistic maps. But this is a very fallacious assumption. It is notorious that the language spoken in a given area was as often as not (to begin with) the language of a small minority of its inhabitants. Thus in Ireland and Wales, the preponderant element in the population is probably pre-Celtic, yet no trace remains of the language of the pre-Celtic peoples : they easily and completely adopted the Celtic speech of their conquerors. The whole of south-western Scotland is preponderantly

Celtic in race, and spoke Celtic till the eleventh or twelfth century; without being conquered, this region adopted English very quickly, and all memory of its Celtic speech was soon lost. Germany east of the Elbe is preponderantly Slavonic in race; yet it thinks itself Teutonic, because the Teuton conquerors of the twelfth and subsequent centuries imposed their own tongue upon their subjects. There is indeed nothing that will so readily give unity to divergent races as the use of a common tongue, and in very many cases unity of language and the community of ideas which it brings, have proved the main binding force in a nation. The racial affinity between the people of Bavaria, who are probably largely Celtic and pre-Celtic, and the people of East Prussia, who are largely Slavonic, is far from close; but the use of a common speech has mainly contributed to weld them into a single nation. There is scarcely any racial affinity between the people of northern Italy and those of the extreme south; but they speak a common language, which has been standardised by a great literature. But for this, how could Mazzini's young prophets have appealed to all the Italians? They would have been in the same case as those pathetic Indian fanatics who, when they desire to address an invocation to their fellows to free the Indian nation from the English yoke, have to use the English language for their appeals, since it alone is intelligible to the educated in all parts of India. A common language means also a common literature, a common inspiration of great ideas, a common heritage of songs and folk-tales embodying, and impressing

upon each successive generation, the national point of view. Most certainly, language counts for far more than race in the moulding of a nation. Yet unity of language does not necessarily bring national unity, and disunity of language does not necessarily prevent it. The Spanish language dominates Central and South America, but these lands have long ceased to feel any such affinity with Spain as would lead them to desire political unity with her. The Americans speak English, but they are a perfectly distinct nationality, and the Australians and Canadians are becoming equally conscious of their nationhood. On the other hand, the Scots are a nation, though some of them speak Gaelic and some English ; the Swiss are a nation, though they have no language peculiar to themselves, but are divided into French-speaking, German-speaking, and Italian-speaking districts ; the Belgians are a nation, though they speak Flemish, French and German. Unity of language, therefore, though it is of great potency as a nation-building force, is neither indispensable to the growth of nationality, nor sufficient of itself to create it.

Unity of religion has sometimes been regarded as a factor in nationhood, and there are certainly cases in which religion has proved itself a potent nation-making force. Thus the national character of the Scots is probably more due to the work of John Knox than to any other single cause. But religion by itself has seldom or never sufficed to create a nation, and the attempt to erect political unity upon the sole basis of religious unity has always failed. It may be more plausibly argued

that religious disunity is hostile to nationhood. Thus it was difference of religion, more than anything else, which made it impossible for the Dutch and the Belgians to live together in a single state, for in language and race the Belgians are divided among themselves more deeply than some of them are separated from the Dutch ; religious disunity forms the main obstacle to the nationalist movement in Ireland ; and the strife between Catholics and Dissidents was one of the principal causes of that internal disorganisation which brought about the downfall of Poland. Yet the cases are at least as numerous in which deep-rooted religious differences have formed no obstacle to national unification. Germany is half Protestant and half Roman Catholic ; England has never known complete religious unity since the Reformation. And to-day, in all western lands, complete freedom of religious opinion is held to be one of the essential notes of a civilised state, and is never found to weaken national feeling. We may conclude, therefore, that while in some cases religious unity has powerfully contributed to create or strengthen national unity, and while in other cases religious disunity has placed grave obstacles in its way, on the whole religion has not been a factor of the first importance in the making of nations. But there is one sense in which it may perhaps be said that religious unity is an indispensable condition of nationality : the fundamental moral conceptions of the people, their essential ideas about their place in the world and their duties to their neighbours, must not be so widely dissimilar as to make mutual understanding or

friendly co-operation impossible or very difficult. Thus the fundamental antipathy between the outlook of the Moslems and the Christians in the Ottoman Empire made the growth of a national sentiment among these communities quite unrealisable; and perhaps the equally deep-seated antipathy between Hinduism and Mahomedanism in India may continue to prove, as it has proved in the past, the most fatal of barriers to the up-growth of a real sense of unity.

Common subjection, during a long stretch of time, to a firm and systematic government, even to a government of a despotic character, may well help to create a nation, especially if the government is able to establish a system of just and equal laws which its subjects can fully accept as part of their mode of life. Beyond question the despotism of the Norman and Angevin kings, and the admirable system of justice which they developed, were a principal factor in the welding of the disorganised English people into a nation conscious of its nationhood; the nationhood of France owes an equal debt to the government of its practically despotic kings from Philip Augustus downwards; and it was the despotism of Charles V and Philip II which hammered the divided states of Spain into a real nation. It is significant that the idea of nationality never dawned upon the peoples of India until they had been submitted to the firm rule and the systematic administration of law which came with the British dominion. If (as is to be hoped) a genuine spirit of national unity arises in India, it will be mainly the product of the political unity

which British rule first gave. But mere unity of government, however admirably wielded, will never of itself produce nationhood: there must first exist other elements, natural affinities of one sort or another, creating the potentiality of a nation, before even uniform laws can create effective unity.

In these days, when it is still fashionable to trace all the movements of the human spirit to economic causes, it is sometimes held that a community of economic interest, with the similarity of occupations and outlook which it brings, is, if not the sole, at any rate one of the controlling factors in the building of nations; and no doubt some plausible supports for this thesis could be drawn from the cases of some little nations like Denmark and Holland. But the theory does not stand examination. There is no real community of economic interest between the Dorset peasant and the Lancashire factory-hand, between the wine-grower of Provence and the collier of Lille. On the contrary, in the economic aspect the Lillois has more affinity with the German of Westphalia than with the Provençal; the agriculturist of East Prussia is economically nearer akin to his unrecognised kinsman in Poland than to the operatives of Saxony. The fiscal policy of governments may no doubt help to strengthen the sentiment of nationality, but it can only do so in a nation where this sentiment is already powerful. Economic policy alone can never weld into unity such a congeries of divided nations as the Austrian Empire. Except where the national spirit is already strong, the attempt to force it by means of fiscal

devices ultimately does more harm than good, by persuading discontented groups that they are being exploited for the advantage of the dominant elements. If the men of Kent thought themselves of a different nationality from the men of Yorkshire, the economic policy of England might well seem to them to be dictated by the superior voting power of the Yorkshiremen, and this persuasion would intensify their desire for the freedom of the Kentish nation. Of all the forces which in any degree contribute to the making of nations, the economic factor is probably the least important.

But it is probable that the most potent of all nation-moulding factors, the one indispensable factor which must be present whatever else be lacking, is the possession of a common tradition, a memory of sufferings endured and victories won in common, expressed in song and legend, in the dear names of great personalities that seem to embody in themselves the character and ideals of the nation, in the names also of sacred places wherein the national memory is enshrined. The indestructible nationality of the rude mountaineers of Serbia is not due to race, or language, or religion, though all these have contributed to form it, so much as to the proud memory of Stephen Dushan, the tragic memory of Kossova and the four bitter centuries of slavery that followed it ; it is deepened by the memory of the long obscure struggle against the Turks from 1804 to 1829, and enriched by the triumphs of 1912 and 1913 ; it is made imperishable by the heroic sufferings of the men of 1914 and 1915, by their agony of defeat quite as much as by

their victories. Here is the source of that paradox of nationality, that it is only intensified by sufferings, and, like the giant Antæus in the Greek fable, rises with redoubled strength every time it is beaten down into the bosom of its mother earth. Heroic achievements, agonies heroically endured, these are the sublime food by which the spirit of nationhood is nourished: from these are born the sacred and imperishable traditions that make the soul of nations. In contrast with them mere wealth, numbers, or territory seem but vulgar things. When a nation is rich in such memories, the peoples outside its borders who have with it any affinities of race, language, or religion will become eager to share in its pride. No one contributes so much to light the flames of national patriotism as the conqueror who, by trying to destroy a nation, gives to it the opportunity of showing that it is inspired by the unconquerable spirit of liberty, by whose appeal the meanest soul cannot fail to be thrilled. Did the Germans realise, when they set themselves to destroy the half-unified little nation of Belgium, and the backward and semi-barbarous little nation of Serbia, that they were making these two nations heroic and immortal, and raising them to a height in the world's esteem which they could otherwise never have attained? Did they altogether forget the days of 1813, when the fire of German patriotism was inextinguishably lighted by the tyranny of Napoleon? It is, indeed, tradition, and above all the tradition of valiancy in the defence of freedom, that has always been the great maker of nations. Why are the Dutch a nation? In race, in language,

in religion they have the closest affinity with the Germans, and in the Middle Ages were included in the German kingdom. They made their nationhood amidst the blood and suffering of the desperate fight for freedom against Spain; and out of the spirit so created came the glories of their maritime power, and the splendours of their art and thought in the seventeenth century. These are memories too precious to be willingly sacrificed even for the sake of the commercial benefits that might result from incorporation in a great Empire. Why are the Swiss a nation, though made up of detached fragments of three great neighbour-peoples? They are made a nation by the memory of their long common defence of freedom among their mountains. Why are the Scots a nation, though they speak two languages? Bannockburn and Flodden, Bothwell Bridge and Culloden, are their title-deeds; and for the Irish, long unhappy memories of subjection and suffering, the memories of the Plantations, and Limerick, and '98, are equally unforgettable. Once such memories have been branded into the soul of a people, their nationhood becomes indestructible. Yet it is good to think that, alongside of these, new and not less binding traditions may arise, of voluntary co-operation for great causes with sister-nations with whom real affinities exist; and out of these can come a sort of supernationality which can embody the old without destroying it. So has grown up the super-nationality of Britain, which incorporates without weakening the nationality of England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. Thus too may grow up, and is grow-

ing up, the still vaster nationhood of all the partner-nations of the British Empire, welded together by the common sacrifices of the last great struggle for freedom.

Nationality, then, is an elusive idea, difficult to define. It cannot be tested or analysed by formulæ, such as German professors love. Least of all must it be interpreted by the brutal and childish doctrine of racialism. Its essence is a sentiment ; and in the last resort we can only say that a nation is a nation because its members passionately and unanimously believe it to be so. But they can only believe it to be so if there exist among them real and strong affinities ; if they are not divided by any artificially maintained separation between the mixed races from which they are sprung ; if they share a common basis of fundamental moral ideas, such as are most easily implanted by common religious beliefs ; if they can glory in a common inheritance of tradition : and their nationality will be all the stronger if to these sources of unity they add a common language and literature and a common body of law. If these ties, or the majority of them, are lacking, the assertion of nationality cannot be made good. For, even if it be for the moment shared by the whole people, as soon as they begin to try to enjoy the freedom and unity which they claim in the name of nationality, they will fall asunder, and their freedom will be their ruin.

Nationality, since it is not solely or even mainly based upon racial homogeneity, can be nursed into existence, even where most of the elements of unity are to begin with lacking. But it is a tender plant ;

and any attempt to force its growth with undue speed must lead to disaster. The nation-state is in fact not a necessary condition of civilised human life and not a natural and obvious mode of political organisation : during the greater part of the world's history, and over the greater part of the world's surface, the very idea of it has never existed. It is a conception, and a mode of political organisation, peculiar (until these latter days) to Europe ; unless we are to see in Japan a unique instance of its independent growth. It arose in Europe under the special circumstances of the Mediæval period ; and because the experience of the earliest successfully established nation-states showed that the conception was extraordinarily well fitted for the encouragement of the great western ideas of Law and Liberty, and also because the potentiality of nation-states existed in a remarkable degree all over Europe, it has expanded itself during the modern age over almost the whole of the Continent.

We say, loosely, that every nation has a *right* to freedom and unity. Such assertions of abstract right in politics are misleading and dangerous, for the assertion of political 'rights' is never really defensible except when it can be demonstrated that the exercise of the 'right' will be to the advantage both of the claimant and of society at large : if the exercise of the so-called 'right' will be disadvantageous to the claimant and to society, then manifestly the 'right' has become a 'wrong.' But in the case of nationality we may safely say that the experience of the whole modern age has shown that where the spirit of nationality genuinely

exists, and is based upon real and strong affinities such as we have described, it is clearly to the advantage both of the nation and of the world that the nation should be left free to work out its own destinies. Thus alone will it be happy ; and thus alone will it be able to make, in the fullest degree, its distinctive contribution to that variety which is the strength of western civilisation.

Let us, then, cease to talk about abstract *rights*, of nations as of men : nations, like men, must earn their rights by their own nobility before they can be safely allowed to enjoy them. And, by avoiding the sweeping assertion of abstract rights, we shall be saved from certain fallacies, and certain dangers, which have hung about this doctrine of nationality ever since it began to be enunciated as a doctrine, and which have helped to bring it into disrepute.

We shall be saved, in the first place, from attributing nationality and its ' rights ' to peoples who lack the essential marks of nationhood. Hungary, for example, is not a nation, though the Magyars are ; for round the skirts of the Magyars, yet within the limits of Hungary, are included fragments of other nations that lie without—Serbs and Croats in the south and west, Rumans in the east, Slovaks in the north. Among these there is no unity ; and to acclaim Hungary as a nation is to sentence it to a false destiny.

We shall be saved, in the second place, from the noxious doctrines of racialism which some would foist upon us under the cloak of the doctrine of nationality. When the pan-Germans put forth their noisy claims to Belgium, Holland, Switzerland,

Scandinavia, and the Baltic provinces of Russia, we shall remember that the ultimate test of nationhood is a passionate conviction of its reality and a passionate desire for its fuller expression among the peoples concerned, and that the strongest buttress of this conviction and of this desire is the existence of a common tradition. And we shall ask ourselves, Do the Dutch and the Danes, the Belgians and the Courlanders, passionately desire to be incorporated in Germany? For if they do not, they are not and ought not to be part of the German nation. We shall ask also, Are the proudest traditions of the Swiss and the Swedes, of the Poles and the Belgians, traditions which they share, and which link them indissolubly with the Germans? For if not, they are not, and ought not to be, part of the German nation.

The reader may feel that we have not attained in this discussion any very clear definition of nationality, or any very satisfactory test of the validity of the claims put forward for national freedom. We are not to base the doctrine of nationality upon abstract rights. We must recognise that there is no single infallible test of what constitutes a nation, unless it be the people's own conviction of their nationhood, and even this may be mistaken or based upon inadequate grounds. No single factor, neither geographical unity, nor race, nor language, nor religion, nor a common body of custom, nor community of economic interest, seems to be indispensable to nationhood: and even the possession of common traditions, though the most powerful of all binding forces, need not prevent the inclusion

within a nation of elements which do not fully share these traditions. Some, at least, of these ties of affinity the people that claims nationhood must possess, but no one of them is essential, or can be used as a certain criterion. How, then, are we ever to be able to determine, in any given case, whether the claim to nationhood holds good or not? To that question it is impossible to give an exact answer, couched in a clear-cut formula, such as doctrinaires love. The history of the national idea shows that each nation in turn has had to prove its right to nationhood, and most often to fight for it against hostile forces which have sometimes appeared to have all the strength of long usage and success on their side. Is there, then, no escape from the unending series of wars for the national principle? There is none except the triumph of the principle in every field where its claims are justified; and even that exception will be valueless if nationalism comes to be identified with racialism.

Some enthusiasts for the national idea contend that the limits of nationalities ought to be decided by the votes of the inhabitants of the disputed districts. But that is no solution at all. It could only be applied (for example in the Austrian Empire) if the forces hostile to nationalism had first submitted to defeat—that is to say, it could only be the outcome of war, not a means of avoiding it. And even where the method of the plebiscite could be freely applied, it would only have satisfactory results among peoples in whom the national spirit was already so strong that no plebiscite

would be necessary to discover their desires. Among peoples in whom the national spirit was not yet strongly developed, or in regions on the margins of two nationalities whose sympathies were drawn in diverse directions, its results must be unsatisfactory, because such peoples are commonly backward and disorganised, and often incapable of understanding the question put to them. In the second place, it is impossible to secure that all illicit influence should be banished from the conduct of such a vote ; and the real decision would often rest in the hands of whoever had the power to determine the limits within which the voting was conducted, and the form in which the question was put. And, finally, among people whose natural affinities are not already plainly manifest, a vote given by one generation could give no assurance that a different spirit would not grow up in the next generation. Imagine a plebiscite held in Belgium in 1815. It might very well have gone in favour of incorporation in Holland, or perhaps in France. But Europe would never have tolerated the second of these decisions, and 1830 showed that the first would have been a wrong decision.

There seems no escape from the conclusion that nationhood must mainly determine itself by conflict. That conclusion appears to be the moral of the history of the national idea in Europe. Yet if it seems a pessimistic conclusion, there is consolation in another moral of this history : that national lines of division, once established by conflict, are extraordinarily permanent, so that if the whole of Europe could once be completely and satisfactorily

divided on national lines, there might be good hope of a cessation of strife. In order to bring out these morals clearly, it is worth while to survey in broad outline the history of the national idea in Europe.

II

THE EMERGENCE OF THE FIRST NATION-STATES

The first of the European peoples to attain to the full stature of organised and conscious nationhood were the English. It is significant that they are, of all the European peoples, the most mixed in regard to race, and that their language is, of all tongues that have ever been spoken on the earth, the most elastic and the most hospitable to foreign infusions. Two things helped them to the early development of national consciousness: the one, their geographical isolation; the other, the stern discipline to which they were submitted under the rule of foreign conquerors of great organising power in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Down to the eleventh century the story of England is the story of a long series of successive waves of immigration and conquest, and of inter-tribal wars. Then came the period of the Norman and Angevin kings: the Rule of Law was established; and from the ordeal England emerged, welded into a nation, in the thirteenth century. The sense of nationhood is to be seen struggling for realisation in the protests against foreign favourites and papal influence during the reign of Henry III, and still more in the endeavours to achieve a new form of national

organisation which give so much interest to that reign. It culminated in the powerful national spirit that marked the reign of Edward I. The unity of the nation was then expressed in the establishment of a complete representative system. And the first result of this unity was a series of attempts to impose an English dominion upon neighbouring peoples, not yet so firmly organised. Hence came the Conquest of Wales, the long war of independence in Scotland, and the Hundred Years' War in France.

But the immediate effect of the impact of a unified nation-state upon incompletely unified nations is to conjure into existence, among them also, the spirit of nationality. Scotland became truly a nation in resistance to the English attempt at conquest. The English attempt to dominate France was only possible because, in spite of the labours of Philip Augustus, St. Louis, and Philip the Fair, France had not yet become a nation fully conscious of its nationhood : as is shown by the fact that large elements within it were ready to welcome and support a foreign conqueror. But the reaction against the English dominion in the early fifteenth century roused into a passion the spirit of nationality in France. It found an inspiring embodiment in that glorious saint of nationality, Joan of Arc ; and from the day when the Maid arose to express the very spirit of France, the flame of French patriotism has never been quenched. Passionate lovers of liberty by every instinct, the countrymen of Abelard and Etienne Marcel, of du Guesclin and Bayard, were willing even to make

the sacrifice of personal freedom in order to secure the freedom and the greatness of *la patrie.*

The English, the Scots and the French : these are the first three peoples in Europe, and indeed in the world, to be inspired by the spirit of nationality, and to achieve the consolidated organisation of the nation-state. All of them are peoples of very mixed races.

Next in the roll of nation-states came Spain and Portugal, also inhabited by peoples of very mixed races. They drew the inspiration of their nationhood from the long crusade against the dominion of the Moors ; and they achieved the sense of unity under the lead of despot-rulers who filled them with pride by leading them forth to foreign conquests. The national spirit of Portugal was set afire by the great achievements of her navigators ; the national unity of Spain, only formally attained by the dynastic union of Castile and Aragon and the conquest of Granada, was welded by the centralised rule of Charles V and Philip II, and still more by pride in the deeds of the *conquistadores* of the New World, and the prestige won in the wars of Europe by the Spanish infantry.

It was at the very opening of the modern age that Spain and Portugal emerged as consolidated nation-states, and their appearance, and especially the long and acute rivalry of Spain and France for the leadership of Europe, helped to fix the character of the new era, which was to be dominated by the rivalry of nation-states. For a century Spain had all the advantage in the rivalry with France, at first because of her dynastic control of vast European

territories outside her own limits, and later because while her people were absolutely united in their loyalty to that Catholic faith whose crusaders they had been during so many centuries, France was for half a century torn asunder by religious wars. These circumstances made it possible for Spain to give expression to the pride of her nationhood by making a bold bid for the sovereignty of the world, a serious attempt to crush out the freedom of other nations and to impose upon them the deadening dominion of the rigid and uniform *kultur* which she upheld.

This is the first of that series of attempts at world-mastery which have been made during the modern age by nation-states intoxicated with the pride of their own strength. Each of them in turn has been overthrown by the desperate resistance of those nations that had already attained to national unity and national consciousness ; and it is no mere coincidence that in each of these struggles a leading part, perhaps the leading part, has invariably been taken by England, the oldest of all the nation-states. Since the fortunate failure of her early attempts to subjugate Scotland and France, England has never tried to suppress or control any other nation-state in Europe, but has rather been the unfailing champion of the common right of all to exist in freedom. This is, of course, due to no superior virtue on her part. Though it has doubtless been influenced by the attachment to liberty bred among her people by their self-governing institutions, it has been mainly due, in the first place, to her insular position, and, in the

second place, to the fact that she has had other means of satisfying her national aspirations outside of the Continent of Europe, in regions where she did not come in conflict with the national spirit. Yet during the very years in which she was fighting the colossus of Spain, she was engaged in the merciless subjugation of the Irish. Throughout the next two centuries Ireland remained an unhappy proof that the rôle of England as the defender of national liberties in Europe was due to no disinterested passion for liberty in itself. It is a strange coincidence that each of the great European struggles in which England has played a leading part—the struggles against Philip II, against Louis XIV, and against Napoleon—has been accompanied by a renewal of cruel warfare for the subjugation of Ireland ; and the present war is the first in which the mass of Irishmen have ranged themselves on the same side as their English fellow-citizens. It was, therefore, not the love of freedom in the abstract, but the necessity of defending her own national existence that led England to play her traditional rôle in these successive crises in the fortunes of the national idea. Nevertheless, it remains true that (putting Ireland aside) England has never in the modern age been the foe of national aspirations in other lands, but that her position and her interests have made her the unfailing enemy of every attempt to impose the dominion of one nation-state over the rest.

The failure of the Spanish attempt to seeure the mastery of the world was due partly to the passionate intensity of national feeling in England ; but it was

due quite as much to the heroic resistance of the Dutch farmers and fishermen who had been brought, by dynastic accidents, under the rule of the Spanish Monarchy. In resisting the foreign tyranny of Spain, the Dutch turned themselves from a bundle of disunited provinces into a nation, and another member was added to the growing list of nation-states permeated by pride in their own nationality. Glorious indeed were the products of this pride during the seventeenth century; and he who would realise how powerful and creative a spirit is the spirit of nationality need only consider the marvellous intellectual activity to which it gave rise, both in England and in the United Provinces, during and after the struggle with Spain.

The sixteenth century also saw the birth of two more organised nation-states, when the break-up of the Union of Kalmar (which had held the Scandinavian nations together, in an unreal union, since 1397) led to the appearance upon the European stage of the Danish and the Swedish nations. Of these two it was Sweden which gave the most startling exposition of the vigour and vitality that spring from the national spirit, and this because she had to fight for her independence against the claims of the King of Poland. The traditions of national vigour established under Gustavus Vasa obtained their most brilliant expression under Gustavus Adolphus; and Sweden, like other nation-states, began to strive to impose her dominion upon her neighbours, conquering the Baltic provinces from Poland and Russia, seizing the territories at the mouths of the German rivers, and almost

succeeding in turning the Baltic into a Swedish lake.

Sweden was able to achieve all this because the peoples from whom she won her conquests, the Germans, the Poles, and the Russians, though all potential nations, had not yet succeeded in working out for themselves an effective national organisation. Even the challenge to their pride involved in the Swedish attacks, which were, in the case of Germany, emphasised by the contemporaneous aggressions of France, did not succeed in stimulating among them the reaction that might have been expected, except in the case of Russia. It was at the end of the seventeenth century, under the leadership of Peter the Great, and as a direct consequence of Swedish aggression, that the spirit of nationality began to work among the vast vague mass of the Russian people. But though it was stimulated in the first instance by the danger from Sweden, the national feeling of Russia, once it had come alive, was yet more deeply affected by the challenge of the Turkish power, whieh at the end of the seventeenth century shut out Russia from the northern shore of the Black Sea, and which also kept in an intolerable slavery the fellow-Slavonic and fellow-orthodox peoples of the Balkans. Religious and racial emotions alike tended to awaken to a growing intensity the national spirit of the Russians, and from the beginning of the eighteenth century onwards Russia, a vast, vague, unorganised mass which was yet intensely national in sentiment, began to play a momentous part in the life of Europe.

Thus by the end of the seventeenth century the national form of state-organisation had taken strong root not only in the west of Europe, where it originated, but in the north and in the extreme east. But the whole of the central and south-eastern region—the area included in modern Germany, Poland, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Italy, and the Balkan peninsula—though it included many peoples among whom existed the elements out of which nationality might spring, was as yet practically untouched by the national movement. This made this area the source of continual unrest, because it made it the obvious prey of the ambitions of aggressive princes, or of already unified nation-states. All the wars of the later seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries sprang either from the extra-European rivalries of the nation-states of the West, or from the unsettled condition of this Central European area, and the temptation which it offered to ambition.

This temptation—due essentially to the failure of Central Europe to organise itself on national lines—provoked the second great modern attempt to establish the supremacy of the power and *kultur* of a consolidated nation-state over the whole of Europe. This second challenge to the liberties of Europe was delivered by the France of Louis XIV, which, having overcome the internal dissensions that had weakened it during the century from 1560 to 1660, and having, in a series of brilliantly conducted wars, proved the superiority of its military methods to those of all its rivals as completely as Prussia did in the great wars of the mid-nineteenth

century, was intoxicated, like Prussia after 1870, by the sense of its own power, and its own worthiness to rule the world. Undeniably the France of Louis XIV possessed a *kultur* which in all outward showing was superior to that of any other state. Nowhere were the resources of the whole nation so efficiently organised, and so completely brought under the control of government. Nowhere had the development of the nation's trade, agriculture, and industry been more scientifically supervised and directed. Under the highly intelligent control of a dynasty which commanded the loyal devotion of the nation, its strength, military and economic, was wielded by two powerful classes: a proud nobility, who had devoted themselves to the study of the arts of war, and who produced, in Condé, Turenne, Luxembourg, and others a remarkable series of commanders of great ability; and a hard-working and eminently competent bureaucracy, of whom Colbert may be taken as the supreme type. In the intellectual sphere France was the acknowledged mistress of the world; her scholars, critics, and philosophers dominated the mind of Europe; her language had become the universal language both of learning and of diplomacy. She might well feel not merely that her *kultur* deserved to win admiration and imitation, but that it entitled her to a commanding supremacy such as Rome had once wielded. The prince who disposed as master of all this splendour and power, was a man of ability, but also of limitless self-esteem; and the consciousness that he possessed, in the incomparably efficient military machine of France, a

weapon which seemed irresistible, proved for him, as the like belief has proved for princes who preceded him, and princes who followed after him, a temptation too great to be withstood.

So the second great challenge to the liberties of Europe was delivered; and, as before, it aroused against itself a combination of all the threatened states, with England as their head and centre. At first, as was to be expected, the great military power, whose whole resources were under the efficient control of its Government, and had been carefully and scientifically organised in preparation for this tremendous adventure, was continuously and brilliantly successful, in spite of the magnitude of the combination arrayed against it. With one brief interval of peace, the struggle lasted for a quarter of a century. In the end, exhausted and impoverished, Louis XIV had to accept defeat, like Philip II. He was defeated by the tenacious resistance of the nation-states, especially England and the United Provinces, which were prepared to exhaust all their resources rather than permit the enthronement of a single dominating power over the liberties of Europe; and to his defeat a principal contribution was made by the maritime strength of England, which practically cut him off from the resources of the outer world.

It might have been expected that the defeat of the second great attempt at European supremacy would, like the first, have encouraged a further development of the national idea. But this was not so; and the eighteenth century was marked, if anything, by a retrogression in this regard. It

was an age of very acute political speculation, but no important political thinker tried to work out the theory of the nation-state, or to analyse the sources of its strength. The nation-state had grown up in every case spontaneously and under the pressure of events, not as the result of conscious theory, and no one had yet realised that it drew its strength from the sentiment of nationality. In the majority of cases, the nation-state had crystallised round a ruling house, and generally a despotic monarchy. The eighteenth century was tempted to attribute the strength of this nation-state or that to its methods of organisation, to its military system, to the mere fact that it enjoyed despotic centralisation—to anything, in fact, but the sentiment of patriotism born of the pride of nationhood. Yet this was the real source of the wonderful *élan* of Spain, of Holland, of France, of Sweden in their periods of advance, and it was this which gave to all the nation-states an unconquerable resisting power against oppression.

The eighteenth century prided itself upon being the age of enlightenment ; and although it had a curious taste for the sentimental in letters, it distrusted "enthusiasm," and had no belief in sentiment as a real and powerful factor in politics. It believed rather in what the modern Germans have taught us to call *realpolitik*—the kind of politics which disregards all sentiment, and takes into its calculation only the more gross and obvious material interests of men. Accordingly the despots who, everywhere save in Britain and Holland, directed during this period the affairs of Europe, governed

their relations solely by dynastic considerations, and never dreamed of taking into account the sentiments or desires of peoples. In treaty after treaty provinces and states were cut up and distributed without ever a thought of the natural affinities of their inhabitants ; they changed ownership like farms in an auction-room, complete with their live stock.

It was this period which produced the most monstrous and unpardonable of all outrages on the national idea—the three partitions of Poland, whereby the living body of a nation that had great traditions, and only needed organisation to rank among the nation-states, was carved into fragments to satisfy the greed of the three neighbouring monarchies of Russia, Prussia, and Austria. It is impossible to find words with which adequately to characterise the methods by which this iniquity was carried through. All three of the partitioning Powers must share the discredit. But for Russia it may be said that the lands which she annexed were in fact largely inhabited by Russians, and had been conquered by Poland in the days of Russia's weakness. Austria may claim some faint excuse on the ground that at least her ruler, Maria Theresa, disliked the project of the first partition, and wept when she signed the agreement ;[1] that Austria had no share in the second partition, and only claimed a

[1] "I weep for you," the Walrus said,
"I deeply sympathise."
With sobs and tears he sorted out
Those of the largest size,
Holding his pocket-handkerchief
Before his streaming eyes.

share in the third so as not to be distanced by her rivals. For Prussia there are no such excuses ; and the student feels an equal disgust when he reads of the cold-blooded cynicism with which Frederick the Great engineered the first partition, or the despicable treachery with which his successor first encouraged the Poles in their earnest attempt to reorganise what remained of their kingdom, and then turned round and rent them. But the sheer wickedness of these events had one important result. It aroused among all Poles a passion of national feeling which was indestructible, which only became stronger with every agony that their unhappy country had yet to undergo, and which made them, during the next age, the eager helpers of revolution in all lands. The iniquity of the partitions, and the heroism with which dying Poland defended herself under the lead of Kosciusko, also aroused intense sympathy in the rest of Europe, and helped to make the national idea a more definite and clearly grasped doctrine than it had hitherto been. But this was the only achievement of the national spirit in the eighteenth century. Otherwise the movement of Europe towards the nation-state as its characteristic form of organisation made no advance during this period.

But it is a striking and significant fact that though the statesmen of the eighteenth century left the idea of nationality altogether out of account in their frequent territorial redistributions, they never found it possible to interfere with the territory of any state in which the national spirit had taken firm root. The Spanish dominions in the un-

nationalised regions of Germany and Italy were annexed or partitioned, but the lands of the Spanish nation remained untouched. France extended her limits by the annexation of Lorraine, but even in her bitterest moments of defeat she lost not an inch of the lands in which the spirit of French nationality was established, and she succeeded in a remarkable degree in inspiring with this spirit the inhabitants of her new acquisitions, though they were German by descent, and even spoke German in many cases. All the squabbles about territory, all the controversies from which wars arose, so far as they did not arise from colonial issues, related to that vast area of Central and Southern Europe which was still "unnationalised." These lands alone enticed the greed of the consolidated nation-states, or of the despot-princes who ruled over states that had no bond of unity except their common subjection to a single master. Unmistakably, it was the absence of the national bond in this region which gave rise to the wars of the eighteenth century.

On the eve of the French Revolution, which was to bring about a great revival of the national idea, this great unnationalised area, extending from the Rhine to the Niemen, and from the Baltic sea to the Mediterranean, included two large Empires inhabited by a jumble of mixed races, and held together by no tie save the strength of the despots who controlled and exploited them. These were the Austrian and the Turkish Empires; and because they were wholly lacking in the strength which comes from the national bond, these two Empires

inevitably drew upon themselves the attacks of their greedy neighbours whenever they seemed to show signs of weakness ; and, unlike the nation-states, both lost much territory during the century, though Austria gained in one direction more than she lost in another. Both, from the very nature of their own power, were the inevitable foes of all national movements, since the extension of national ideas to their own subjects might involve their utter ruin. Apart from these two heterogeneous and unnatural realms, the rest of this area was divided into a multitude of little states, separated by quite arbitrary boundaries, and ruled over by petty despots who (like the Elector of Hesse) were apt to regard their subjects simply as the live stock of their estates, useful as tax-yielding animals, and capable of being sold for use in American or other wars. There were nine of these petty states in Italy, over three hundred in Germany.

But amid the German chaos, one vigorous series of despots, the successive kings of Prussia, were carving out for themselves a considerable dominion by brute force and a cynical disregard of all moral sanctions ; and because this growing Prussian state seemed to form a possible nucleus for a more consolidated Germany in the future, some Germans, towards the end of the period, were beginning to regard its growth with interest and hope. But these were few. Even the poets and philosophers who were bringing a new glory to the name of Germany in the later years of the eighteenth century, were almost wholly untouched by the national spirit. They were cosmopolitans, and,

like Lessing, regarded patriotism as a vice, because it tended to raise needless barriers of prejudice, and because their concern was with the universal kingdom of the mind. Nor did the Prussian kings allow themselves to be distracted by any sentimentalism about German nationality. Their concern was to extend the dominions of the House of Hohenzollern. They were competent and thrifty rulers, because they were intelligent enough to realise that a well-governed and prosperous state can alone maintain the burden of the military might by which an empire can be carved out. But they had no illusions; they were handicapped by no doctrines or scruples. The modern German historians, in their attempt to glorify the Hohenzollerns, have tried to see in them the devoted and conscious builders of the future united Germany. But no trace of any sentiment of German patriotism is to be found in Frederick the Great or any other member of his house during this period. Indeed, their chief accessions of territory, which resulted from the partitions of Poland, had the effect of turning Prussia into a predominantly Slavonic and non-German state; and it was only because Napoleon had torn away the bulk of these lands that Prussia was able to pose as the leader of the German nation in the great national rising in 1813.

Thus, on the whole, the extension of the national principle received a check in the eighteenth century. Many of the most unhappy aspects of the history of the century are traceable to this cause; and the repudiation or disregard of the national principle went far to nullify most of the reforming activities

of the age of enlightenment, admirable and remarkable as they were. The Benevolent Despots, who were everywhere at work during the second half of the century, achieved scarcely anything of permanent value, assiduously though they laboured in the reform of their laws, in the development of intellectual life, and in the improvement of the material welfare of their subjects. And the reason for their failure was that they were not supported by the sentiment of their peoples. France under the vicious and stupid government of Louis XV, England under the timid and muddle-headed rule of the Whigs, were both happier lands than the Austria of the well-meaning Joseph II, or the Prussia of the intelligent and efficient Frederick the Great: they were happier because they were nations.

The French Revolution and the Napoleonic era brought about a very vigorous revival of the national spirit in Europe, and now for the first time what may be called the nationalist *doctrine* began to be preached. Not that the rights of nationalities formed a recognised or important element in the body of revolutionary doctrines to which the French endeavoured to convert Europe at the point of the sword. It was the Rights of Man that formed the text of these fierce apostles. But as the Rights of Man primarily included the right to choose their own governors, it was a natural corollary that men had a right to be governed by their mutual sympathies and affinities in the organisation of the state, and once this position is granted, the nationalist doctrine is established. Yet the French

revolutionary leaders did not preach nationalism; in their annexation of German, Belgian, and Dutch lands they disregarded the national sentiment as completely as the despots of the eighteenth century.

But in three ways the Revolution, and still more Napoleon, prepared the way for the great outburst of national sentiment which was to be a principal feature of the nineteenth century. In the first place, Napoleon was the first European statesman to realise the power of the national sentiment, and to make conscious appeal to it, not only in France, but elsewhere. His creation of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw was a deliberate attempt to enlist on his side the passionate patriotism of ruined Poland, and to use it as a check on the eastern monarchies. It served its purpose; the Poles remained intensely loyal to the man who had revived their national freedom, and fought for him to the end. In Italy, though Napoleon annexed one-third of the country directly to France, and turned a second third into the dependent kingdom of Naples, yet for the remaining third he revived the ancient name of the kingdom of Italy, and he swept away the irrational political divisions into which Italy had been split throughout the modern age. By Italians, as well as by Poles, Napoleon was looked back to as the first friend of the national cause; his name remained a rallying cry, and in the ineffectual revolutions of 1821 and 1830 there were many who favoured the erection of a Bonapartist standard in Italy. Although Napoleon ruthlessly overrode national sentiment wherever it suited his purpose—in Spain, in

Portugal, in the Netherlands—he was genuinely aware of the poteney of this sentiment; and after his fall, in St. Helena, he asserted that his aim had been the reeonstruetion of Europe on national lines, and maintained that stable peaee would never be attained until this was done. In making this assertion as to his own poliey, Napoleon was, of course, trying rather to win a favourable verdict from posterity than to tell the prosaie truth about the past. But the faet that he made sueh a elaim shows that he was awake to the importanee of the national sentiment in a degree unknown among his predeeessors or eontemporaries.

In the seeond plaee, the Revolution and Napoleon paved the way for a reeonstruction of Europe on national lines by obliterating all the old landmarks, by sweeping away most of the erowd of paltry prineelings in Germany and Italy, and by destroying that habit of taking the existing order for granted whieh is always the ehief obstaele to the establishment of a new order. The old absurdities might be re-established, though in faet it was found impossible to restore them in full; but they eould never again be as seeure as they had been.

But the main eontribution of this age to the growth of the national spirit was brought about by the reaetion against Freneh dominion. At first welcomed, espeeially in Germany and Italy, beeause it brought with it many of the boons of the revolution, the military empire of Napoleon soon aroused a passionate resistance whieh gave to the national idea an intensity such as it had never known before, and made the eause of national freedom appear the

most sacred of causes. In effect, Napoleon's empire constituted the third great challenge to the liberties of Europe ; and like its predecessors, it was shattered on the rock of national patriotism. Napoleon's claim to supremacy was indeed better justified than that of either of his predeccssors ; because his rule, wherever it was cstablished, led to an immense advance in the two things that form the essence of western civilisation. The maker of the *Code Napoléon* gave to his subjects a more logical and lucid system of rational law than had yet been known among the sons of men. And although his military autocracy was a denial of political liberty, yet it secured to France, and it offered to the rest of Europe, the very real boon of social liberty, the abolition of caste privileges, the destruction of oppressive feudal incidents, and the enjoyment of equality before the law. Nevertheless, admirable as was the Napoleonic *kultur* in many vital respects, its successful imposition upon the whole of Europe would have been a disaster, because in the last resort it rested only upon military force, and not upon consent ; and because, still more, it was accompanied by a grave restriction of freedom of thought. The great conqueror aspired to control not only the bodies but the minds of his subjects ; he not merely regulated, he doctored, the Press ; and he attempted systematically to govern the thinking of the educated classes in France by controlling the teaching in schools and University faculties. Such a regime, had it succeeded, must have killed freedom ; and the national spirit was truly guided in resisting it to the death.

As before, it was the oldest of the nation-states, Britain, that formed the heart of the resistance. She alone held out undaunted when all Europe seemed to lie at the feet of the conqueror. The merely military monarchies of Austria and Prussia crumbled before Napoleon's attack, because they lacked the inspiration of the national spirit: Britain alone never made peace except for one brief breathing-space, and that on equal terms; she held out for two-and-twenty years, though the effort formed a terrible strain on her resources, and her people suffered grave distress. And at length the spirit of nationalism rose elsewhere in revolt against the conqueror. From 1808 onwards the national spirit of Spain, though hampered by disorganisation and poverty, proved unconquerable; and although Spanish armies were unable to face the triumphant hosts of France in the field, the Spanish guerilla forces, supported from the sea by British fleets and troops and money, prolonged the Peninsular campaign for six long years, and turned it, as Napoleon himself admitted, into a "running sore" that drained his resources, and prepared his ultimate defeat. The example of Spain thrilled the other subject nations. Even in Austria something of the heroic spirit of patriotism appeared in the hard-fought though unsuccessful campaign of 1809. In Germany a new ferment was at work. Prussia, cut down to half of her former extent, but made once more purely German by the loss of the Polish lands, was reorganising and transforming her whole system under the guidance of Stein and Scharnhorst, and was drawing to herself the ardent hopes of

patriotic Germans. Finally, Napoleon drifted into conflict with the slow, unquenchable, smouldering fire of Russian patriotism ; and in the campaign of 1812 his ruin was decided. As he fell back from Moscow, the electric thrill of national resolve passed through all Germany. The spirit of nationality had been inextinguishably awakened in a large part of the unnationalised area of Europe, and against this force not even Napoleon could stand. Leipsic was indeed " the battle of the nations " ; Waterloo was the *coup de grâce* administered by the oldest of the nation-states to the latest defiance of the national cause in Europe.

Since Napoleon had been overthrown by the national spirit, it might have been expected that the national idea would have played a large part in the reconstruction of Europe which followed his downfall ; and indeed this was the confident hope especially of the now fervent nationalists of Germany. But these anticipations were disappointed. The statesmen of Europe in 1815 had not yet realised the strength of the passion of nationality once it is aroused ; and the most influential among them, Metternich, represented the Austrian Empire, which was, from its very nature, the sworn foe of the nationalist idea. So the settlement of 1815 disregarded national lines of division almost as completely as they had been disregarded by the statesmen of the eighteenth century. Those lands which were already nation-states were indeed left untouched ; even France did not suffer the indignity of partition, to the disgust of her bitterest foe, Prussia. The Polish Grand Duchy of Warsaw

retained a distinct organisation ; but it was placed under the crown of Russia, which respected the guarantee of its national existence only for fifteen years, and large sections of Polish territory, Posen and Galicia, were placed under the dominion of Prussia and Austria. Belgium was added to Holland, an arrangement to which there seemed at the time no ground for objection, since the Belgians had never been an independent state. Italy became once more "a mere geographical expression," and was divided, as in the eighteenth century, into a number of petty states, dominated by Austria, which annexed the richest regions of the north. In Germany, Prussia had her territory more than doubled, but there were 39 distinct states set up, and if these were of more respectable size than the 360 states of 1789, their larger size presented even greater difficulties to any movement for unification. Finally, the two great anti-national Empires of Austria and Turkey were left untouched ; they remained unnatural bundles of conflicting and heterogeneous nationalities curbed by an oppressive absolutism ; and these two Empires continued to be, during the next period, the chief enemies of the national cause, and the chief sources of war.

The inevitable result of such an adjustment was that in all the areas whose national aspirations had been disregarded an almost unceasing succession of revolutionary disturbances filled the next era. The potentates of 1815 believed that they had secured the basis of permanent peace ; they had in reality only sown the dragon's teeth from which sprang all the wars and disturbances of the nineteenth century.

Baulked of its expected triumph, the nationalist cause took the form of secret conspiracies and underground organisation.

III

THE AGE OF NATIONALISM, 1820–1878

With the reaction against the settlement of 1815 a new and distinctive era opens in the history of the national idea. Hitherto the formation of nation-states had been determined by circumstances and by the pressure of events; no *doctrine* of nationality had yet been put forward. But the events of the Revolutionary period had given a new prominence to the idea of nationhood; the disappointment of national aspirations in 1815 had still further emphasised this idea; and in the next age it began to be developed into a theory and a creed. The years from 1820 to 1878 are in a peculiar and special degree the "nationalist" period in European history; the period during which the doctrine of nationality was preached as fervently as a religion, and became the dominant factor in the moulding of events. Naturally this doctrine, which was now clearly defined for the first time, and which was urged with passion, assumed in some cases extravagant forms.

Two main tendencies among the enthusiasts for nationalism may be perceived during the period from 1815 to 1848, and especially during the second half of this period, after the revolutions of 1830.

The first may be called the dream of the exiles, the second the dogma of the professors.

Knots of fanatical exiles from Italy, Poland, Hungary, Germany, and other disunited and oppressed lands, gathered in Paris and London, in Belgium and Switzerland, and became the centres of an unceasing propaganda, which, because it was conducted in common by men of many different nationalities, took on a certain international character. The greatest of all these exiled prophets, and the inspirer of them all, was Mazzini, the Italian. His chief interest was, of course, in Italy. The society of Young Italy, which he founded in 1831, aimed at enlisting young men to undertake the dissemination of the national idea among all sections of the Italian people, regardless of hardships or risks. They were to be ready at all times to sacrifice their lives, in the belief that "ideas grow quickly when they are watered by the blood of martyrs." They were, above all, to labour to inspire their fellow-countrymen, at the plough, or the forge, or in the Alpine pastures, with the tale of the glorious but forgotten traditions of their country; for, in Mazzini's belief the traditions of past glories and past sufferings are more potent to form the soul of a nation than any other factor whatsoever. But Mazzini, and his fellow-enthusiasts of other nationalities, did not work or plot exclusively for the freedom of their own nations. Theirs was a cosmopolitan nationalism; they wished to secure freedom for all peoples that could prove their claim to nationhood. Mazzini believed that the freedom of Italy, however triumphantly it might

be established, would be incomplete and insecure unless free Italy should become a partner in a great brotherhood of free nations. So his Young Italy developed into, and became only a section of, a larger society called Young Europe, whose other sections included Young Germany, Young Poland, Young Hungary. It was in the preaching of these devoted and often quite unpractical enthusiasts, that the doctrine of nationality was fully formulated —the sweeping assertion that not merely this nation or that, but every nation, just because it is a nation, has a right to be free and to be united. And as the ideas of Mazzini exercised a great influence among the more Liberal sections of the great free nations of France and Britain, the doctrine of nationality began to be widely accepted in the large and generous sense which Mazzini gave to it.

It would not be true to say that the Mazzinian doctrine of nationality exclusively controlled the Italian national movement, for there were many elements in that movement which distrusted Mazzini's creed. But more than any other factor it determined the character of the *risorgimento*, and made it the purest and noblest expression of the national spirit which European history records. Illustrated by innumerable acts of heroism and sacrifice, and by personalities marked by the most selfless devotion, it aroused the sympathy of generous spirits in all lands, to a degree which was never equalled in any other case. The progress of German unity under Bismarck could only awaken a mixture of cold admiration, profound distaste, and fear; but the work of Mazzini, of Garibaldi,

even of Cavour, appealed to all the nobility that was in men. And the Italian movement, thus inspired and directed, was at no moment hostile to the just aspirations of other nationalities. It could arouse no jealousies in the already established nation-states, and it left no rankling resentments. Its only enemy was the anti-national empire of Austria, which was the foe of all national movements.

But concurrently with the propaganda of Mazzini and the other sincere Utopians whom he inspired, the nationalist idea was also being developed in another form, and was taking another colour, among the scholars of the German universities. For the national spirit in Germany, disappointed of success in the political sphere, found its main expression in the ardent labours of scholarship, and its principal temples in the numerous German universities. The old indifference to politics, the old contempt for the "vice" of patriotism, which had been shown by German writers and thinkers in the eighteenth century, had now altogether vanished; and University Professors became, to a degree which has never had any parallel in other countries, the leaders of political thought and the spokesmen of the national cause. Some of them shared the cosmopolitan nationalism of Mazzini, and dreamed of a new Europe in which every nation should be free and self-governing, and from which, for that reason, all wars and international bitterness should be banished. These men were regarded with alarm by their governments, and were often very sharply dealt with. But others, and especially the philologists and historians, from whom came in this

period the most remarkable products of German learning, based their political ideas more directly upon their own studies, and drew from these a national theory of a new type. The philologists, investigating the rudiments of the German language, and its primitive literary remains, arrived at a strange hero-worship of the ancient Germans, to whom they attributed the loftiest love of liberty, and an essential nobility of mind which made them the destined conquerors and organisers of the decrepit Roman world. The historians reconstructed the early history of the German stock in the light of these doctrines of the philologists, and represented their remote ancestors, not (as was the truth) as vigorous savages incapable of developing a real civilisation of their own, and owing their growth entirely to the ennobling contact with Rome and Christianity, but as a race endowed with profound and unique political genius and of a quite Utopian purity and nobility of mind. They represented the whole history of Europe as a strife between the decadent influences of the Latins and the manly freedom of the Germans, and they found in the German reformation a proof of their theories. Hence came the conclusion that Germany must regain national unity, not in order that she might take her place as an equal among the free nations of Europe, but in order that she might fulfil her destiny of controlling and reshaping the civilisation of the west. This school of thinkers, for the most part, in the first half of the century, admired and acclaimed the achievements of England; for they regarded England as a purely Teutonic country where-

in the inherent virtues of the Germanic stock had enjoyed, by the accidents of history, more favourable opportunities for realising themselves than had existed in the true Homeland of the Germans.

All this body of doctrine, which was not at first put forward as a political system, but which was none the less influential for that, amounted essentially to a glorification of the Teutonic as against other stocks. It was the doctrine of racialism, not the true doctrine of nationalism, and it rested, as we have already seen, upon a whole mass of false assumptions in regard to the purity of races, and the permanence of race-characteristics. It was essentially unscientific; yet it was supported by such an impressive apparatus of scholarship, and was developed with such massive and elephantine learning, that it increasingly imposed itself upon the mind of Europe. England, not unflattered, in course of time adopted it, and it still forms the implicit basis of much of our treatment of history; though in view of the extremely mixed racial character of the British peoples, and particularly of the English, its absurdity is especially patent when it is applied to British history.

In other countries the glorification of Teutonism could scarcely be expected to find so ready a welcome; but in them it led to the development of rival doctrines of race-superiority. Germanism, by reaction, produced Slavism, which was being preached by Palacky in Bohemia during these years, and the doctrines of Slavism found a ready hearing in Russia, in Croatia, and in other Slavic lands. A doctrine of Latinism also arose, though

it never obtained so much acceptance. It took its most absurd form, later in the century, in Rumania, where a bastard dialect of Latin is spoken by a people which includes a sediment of nearly every race that has passed from Asia into Europe. In short, it is difficult to exaggerate the mischief that was done to the true cause of nationalism by its distortion under the influence of this pretentious pseudo-scientific exploitation of the idea of race-superiority. Where it established itself (and it acquired some influence in all lands, though it only attained full supremacy among the Germans) it made the national cause in one country seem to be the rival and the enemy, instead of the ally, of the national cause in other countries.

Fortunately for Europe, the Italian or nationalist doctrine, rather than the German or racialist, exercised the greater practical influence in the national movements of the nineteenth century. Even in Germany itself, down to 1848, the cosmopolitan spirit of sympathy with other nationalities was still powerful, and it was not until after the failure of the 1848 revolution that the blatant Teutonism of the professors began seriously to affect political action. But whether one doctrine or the other held the field in this country or that, the nationalist movements of the nineteenth century are distinguished from their predecessors by the extent to which they were influenced by theories. The earlier nations had achieved their nationhood as M. Jourdain talked prose, without realising what a significant thing they were doing: they were guided by their own instincts and traditions, and

never stopped to theorise. But the nations which achieved their unity in the nineteenth century did so in accordance with elaborately discussed principles.

Two nation-states of the first rank, Germany and Italy, and five little nation-states, Greece, Belgium, Serbia, Rumania, and Bulgaria, took shape amid the turmoils that distracted Europe between 1820 and 1878. Of these seven, one only—Germany—was able to achieve her unity by her own unaided strength. All the rest owed their success, in whole or in part, to the aid of one or more of the great powers which were sympathetic to the national idea. Broadly speaking, the two powers which have been most steadily sympathetic to the national cause, though they themselves had little or nothing to gain from its success, have been Britain and France, the two oldest of the nation-states. Russia has been the main creator of the little nation-states of the Balkan peninsula, where her traditional sympathies were enlisted on their side, but elsewhere she has been generally hostile or indifferent to nationalist movements, and in the case of Poland was responsible for one of the greatest of national tragedies. Prussia, true to the single-minded concentration upon her own interests which has characterised her policy throughout the modern age, has never lifted a finger to help another nation to achieve unity or freedom, except that, to suit her own purpose, when she wanted an ally against Austria in 1866, she helped Italy to win the province of Venetia. Otherwise all her interventions have been hostile to the nationalist cause ; and even in

Germany she placed every difficulty in its way, until she saw her chance of using the national cry as a means for establishing her own dominion over the other German states. Austria has been the consistent enemy of every nationalist movement during the century, and both Germany and Italy, before they could achieve unity, had to wage war with her. Her steadfast comrade in this attitude has been Turkey, at whose expense four of the new nation-states were created.

It is instructive to note that the grouping of powers here indicated as friendly or hostile to the nationalist movement during the nineteenth century is reproduced in the rival leagues which are ranged against one another in the Great War. The powers which have given most help to the cause of national freedom are in deadly conflict with the powers which have been most hostile to it. And this, as we shall see, is no mere accident.

It is at first sight surprising to find Germany arrayed among the forces opposed to the national principle, seeing that the Germans suffered and sacrificed as much as any people to achieve their national unity. But a very slight examination of the character of the national movement in Germany is sufficient to show that this result is far from unnatural. The German national movement may be divided into two periods, the first of which extends from 1815 to 1850, the second from 1850 to 1870. During the first period it was a movement from below, a movement of ideas, which inspired the enthusiasm of poets and of generous youth. Though to some extent tinctured by the teaching

of the philologists and historians, with their assertion of the inherently superior virtues of the Teutonic stock, it had not yet lost the fine cosmopolitan note which the German intellectual world had inherited from the great age of Goethe, and the Nationalists of the twenties and thirties found some consolation for their own disappointments in the successes of other countries—of Greece, of Belgium, of the South American Republics. Throughout this period the nationalist movement was regarded with extreme disfavour by the governments of all the states, and especially by that of Prussia: Arndt, the poet of the national rising in 1813, the author of the stirring verses *Was ist Deutschland?* was suspended from his chair in the Prussian university of Bonn, because he was regarded as a dangerous revolutionary. The Junkers and the Bureaucrats who ruled Prussia were indeed uniformly contemptuous of all the vague idealism which was during these years fermenting in the German universities. They would have resisted to the last ditch any movement of unification which would have merged Prussia in Germany; and if they occasionally condescended to use the language of the nationalists, it was only in the hope of employing them as a means whereby Prussia might establish her dominion over the other German states.

In spite of all this official opposition, however, the preachers of the national idea seemed to have won a great victory in the revolution of 1848, when all the princes, terrified by a unanimous revolutionary outburst, were forced to agree to the election of a single representative parliament for

the whole of Germany, whose business was to be the drafting of a constitution for a unified German state. In the Parliament of Frankfort the idealists, the nationalists *pur sang*, had their chance; and they failed. The causes of their failure were partly to be found in their own unpractical character, and their inability to agree upon a clear policy. But in a far greater degree the failure of 1848 was due to the secret hostility of the princes, and of the old ruling interests; above all to the impossible attitude adopted by Prussia, which, while it longed to seize the chance of increasing its power, was unwilling to come in on equal terms, or to accept the system of constitutional government upon which the reformers insisted. If the men of 1848 had been successful, the whole history of modern Germany and indeed of modern Europe would have been different. But they failed; and the hopeless nature of their failure left the field clear for a wholly different method of procedure and a new set of ideals: the procedure of Bismarck, and the ideals of racialism.

The actual unification of Germany was brought about not, like the unification of Italy, by the generous and self-sacrificing ardour of patriots and martyrs, and by the unanimous will of a great people thirsting for unity and freedom. It was brought about by blood and iron, by force and fraud, by the brutal use of the military might of Prussia, exercised in a series of three deliberately planned wars of aggression. The policy of Bismarck, down to the moment of his dazzling victory over Austria in 1866, was detested and bitterly opposed

by the majority in the Prussian parliament and by all the other German states. It in no sense represented the will even of the Prussian people. The war of 1866 was not merely a war against Austria, it was (as modern Germans are apt to forget) a civil war in Germany itself, in which most of the lesser states took the field against Prussia. Its chief result, apart from the exclusion of Austria from German politics, was the forcible annexation to Prussia of the kingdom of Hanover and the Electorate of Hesse, and these annexations enabled Prussia to impose her will upon the whole of North Germany and to set up a constitution for the North German confederation which gave her an absolutely controlling voice. The southern states still remained watchful and suspicious ; they had to be tricked into union by playing upon their fears of France ; and because Bismarck knew that they would never willingly submit to the Prussian yoke except under the influence of fear or a common enthusiasm, he engineered the war with France as a means of forcing them in. Thus the actual unification of Germany was achieved by methods totally unlike those employed in any of the movements by which the other nation-states of Europe have been established. Though the people of Germany desired unity, they hated (at the time) the methods by which it was achieved. It was imposed upon them from above, by force ; and except through their compulsory participation in the armies by whose means Prussia conquered Germany, the people had no share in the achievement. But they were dazzled by its brilliance when the work was

finished. They accepted it joyfully, because what they desired had been obtained ; and immediately began to justify and glorify the means, because they found the end was good. But the means were force and fraud and the disregard of all moral restraints ; the imposition of dominion, not the acquisition of freedom. The spirit created by such methods was far different from the generous spirit of liberty which was preached by Mazzini, and which was never forgotten by Cavour, even in the midst of the tortuous devices to which he was sometimes driven. The worship of mere Power and Efficiency into which Germany was drawn by the successes of Bismarck was fatal to any generous sympathy with oppressed and struggling peoples. It gave new force and vitality to the poison of racialism which was already working in the veins of the German people.

The influence of this temper is most strikingly illustrated in the fortunes of the three detached fragments of other nationalities which were included, unwilling and protesting, within the German Empire ; for Germany is the only nation-state whose unification has been accompanied by the forcible subjugation of peoples of other nationalities. The Polish province of Posen had been a part of Prussia since 1815, and, before that, from 1793 to 1806. The government of this province has been more efficient in a material sense than that of any other section of divided Poland, but its inhabitants have never been reconciled to the new nationality that has been imposed upon them. They elect to the German Reichstag representatives whose atti-

tude leaves no doubt of their hatred of the connexion. In Posen and the other Polish towns there is an absolute cleavage, a mutual boycott, between the German official class and their native subjects; and the cause of this deep and undying hostility is that the Poles have been uniformly treated as a subject and inferior people. Their language has been proscribed; the most systematic attempts have been made to oust them from the land, and to introduce colonists of "pure" German blood; the ingenuity of the German bureaucracy has been exhausted in the attempt to discover means of denationalising these alien subjects. But the only result of a century of efficient and scientific tyranny has been to deepen and strengthen the dull resentment which these unhappy people feel for their masters. They are not, and they never will be, loyal German citizens. The same result has attended the similar policy pursued among the Danes of Schleswig, who were conquered in the Danish war of 1864: and the spectacle of the tyranny endured by the Schleswigers has served to keep alive and strong the resentment against the German people which has been felt by the Danes ever since that brutal and dishonourable war. Finally, in 1871, Germany annexed from France the two provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, both inhabited by peoples of German stock, many of whom still speak German. They had only been incorporated in France for a comparatively short period, Lorraine for one hundred years, Alsace for two. But they had willingly accepted membership of the French community because, especially since the Revolution,

no attempt had been made to assimilate them by force, while they had enjoyed every privilege on equal terms with their French-speaking neighbours. The loyalty to France of Alsace and Lorraine forms a remarkable illustration of the power of the true spirit of nationality, which rejoices in freedom, to assimilate peoples of divergent race. The Germans have had forty-five years in which to reconcile these people of German descent to their reunion with the parent-stock. They have utterly failed. They have only succeeded in arousing against themselves an intense and enduring distaste ; because they have endeavoured to root out the beloved usages of France by force, and have treated those who showed any tenderness for their French memories with insult and petty tyrannies. The spirit of Zabern, which is the spirit of dominion and of racial pride, can never assimilate or reconcile ; it can only alienate. And the main result of this tragic failure has been to maintain in intense life the hatred and anger of the French against their neighbours.

Thus the appearance of Germany as a unified nation-state has not strengthened the national cause in Europe, or added a new recruit to the number of powers friendly to the aspirations of divided or oppressed nationalities, or helped to diminish the danger of war by removing the causes of bitterness ; for, owing to the methods by which German unity was established, and the spirit that has inspired the unified German nation, it has created new bitternesses far more dangerous than those which it healed. The union of Germany,

instead of raising a new bulwark for Liberty, has raised a graver menace than the national cause has yet had to face, and has led in due time to a challenge to national freedom in Europe more terrible than any of those which have marked the epochs of modern history.

When the great period of nationalist wars and revolutions came to an end in 1878, the political geography of Europe had been materially simplified and clarified. By the unification of Germany and Italy, one-half of the great unnationalised area which still survived in 1815 had been satisfactorily cleared up. But in the other half, represented by the Austrian and Turkish Empires, the national principle had only achieved an incomplete and partial victory. This area therefore continued to be the field of fitful disturbances, and the sphere of the rivalries of the consolidated Powers; and all the troubles and alarms of the last forty years have mainly centred in this region. Its perturbed politics formed the immediate cause of the Great War, and will continue to be a source of future disturbances, unless a just and permanent settlement can be attained. For that reason it is desirable to glance at the nature of the movements which were at work in this area during the nationalist period, and the reason for the incompleteness of their results.

Both geographically and historically this whole area, which constitutes a positive museum of races, may be regarded as a single unit. Its dominant feature is the long chain of the Carpathian and Bohemian mountains, which curves from south-

east to north-west round the Danube valley like a huge breakwater. Round this breakwater have swirled and eddied all the floods of racial migration that have swept from the East across Europe: sometimes they have been checked by the breakwater, and their course diverted; sometimes great fragments of them have been caught and retained, or forced to drop down into the Balkan peninsula, which hangs below like a huge bag without any outlet. The result has been a racial confusion unparalleled in any other part of Europe; and the main political divisions of the area have never at any time even approximately corresponded with the lines of racial division. This in itself would have mattered little, for, as we have seen, nationality does not depend upon racial unity. But the chief races have settled in blocks which are defined fairly clearly; the lines of political division between states have cut across these blocks; and the racial kinship of the politically severed races on the two sides of the boundaries has prevented the elements which were politically united from combining to form a new and national unity. Thus the line of division between the Austrian and the Turkish Empires, as it was drawn in 1815, cut across the very middle of the block of Rumanians who inhabit both sides of the Carpathian chain, and across the very middle of the block of Serbian Slavs who inhabit the valley of the middle Danube, with its tributaries the Morava, the Save, and the Drave. And what added to the confusion was that in the northern and southern halves of this area, the ruling races, each in a minority in its own region, prided

themselves upon emphasising their superiority to their subjects, and maintained their power by playing off the conflicting races one against the other. These ruling races were three.

South of the Danube the Turks had held sway since the fourteenth century over Greeks, Serbs, Rumans, Bulgars, and Albanians, with a regime of slipshod tolerance varied by spasms of outrage, which never for a moment encouraged the subject races to forget that they were oppressed, or to identify their interests with those of their masters. And as the Turkish rulers, always few in number, had never aspired to anything more than a mere military dominion, and had never shown any capacity to grasp the idea of Law, there had never been any chance of their performing the function which the Norman conquerors performed in England, of welding disunited peoples into a nation. Ever since the Turkish conquest it had been apparent that the only cure for the evils which they had brought was their complete extrusion from Europe; and their desolating ascendancy over peoples who were (unlike themselves) capable of civilisation, had for long only been kept alive by the mutual jealousies of the Powers which aspired to supplant them.

These Powers were two, Austria and Russia. Austria had been the principal enemy of the Turk during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and had gained much territory then at his expense. Since the early eighteenth century she had fought no Turkish war, and she has never taken up arms against the Turk during the nineteenth century. But she had not abandoned the long-cherished

ambition of extending her dominion southwards to the Ægean Sea and the desirable port of Salonika ; and, as her Empire already consisted of a medley of subject races, she saw no objection to adding to their number. She waited on events for such chances of snapping up territory without fighting for it as occurred in 1878, when she obtained control over the Serbian regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina ; meanwhile she used all her diplomatic weapons to prevent her rival Russia from seizing the prey she had marked down for herself.

The Russian people dreamed of freeing from an infidel yoke the city of Constantinople, which is the traditional capital of the Orthodox or Greek form of Christianity, and which would also give to the land-locked Empire free access to open seas. But they were also moved by a genuine sympathy for the subject-races of the Balkans, most of whom were their cousins in race, and all of whom shared their adherence to the Greek Church. Thus it was not merely a desire for dominion, but also a sincere and genuine sympathy which drove Russia forward in the Balkans. For that reason this despotic Power has in this region been the friend and patron of national freedom, and all the little Balkan States owe their national independence mainly or wholly to her. During the first half of the nineteenth century, as the result of two wars (1812 and 1826–9), she helped to establish the independence of Greece, and won local autonomy for a small part of the future Serbia and for the two provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia, which were subsequently united to form Rumania. At every point her efforts were

opposed, and in part frustrated, by Austria ; while Britain also, through fear for India, helped to keep alive the stagnant and deadening rule of the Turk. The first half of the century, therefore, saw only the modest beginning of national movements within the Turkish Empire ; and between 1830 and 1876 there was a long pause in the expansion of the nationalist system in this region.

To the north of the Danube, within that part of the unnationalised area which constituted the Austrian Empire, there were two ruling races, the Germans of Austria proper and the adjacent provinces of Tyrol, Styria, and Carinthia, and the Magyars or Hungarians who inhabited the central Danubian plain. For a thousand years, since their migration from Asia in the eighth century, the Magyars (who are racially akin to the Turks) had dominated the whole of the region now known as the Kingdom of Hungary, and had exercised a proud and intolerant sway over the surrounding subject races—the Slavonic Slovaks to the north, the Rumans of Transylvania to the south-east, the Slavonic Croats and Serbs to the south and south-west. Outnumbered by their subjects, they kept aloof from them, employed them as serfs, avoided inter-marriage, and so failed utterly to weld the mixed population of this region (as they might have done) into a nation ; what they especially valued was their racial ascendancy, not the equal liberty of nationhood. But their power had been broken by the Turks in the early sixteenth century, and when they escaped from the Turkish yoke, at the end of the seventeenth century, it was only to pass under

the dominion of the Germans of Austria. They retained the memory of their old proud independence and some shadow of their old parliamentary system ; and when the thrill of the nationalist movement was passing over Europe from 1820 onwards, it found ready fuel among them. They were eager to establish their freedom from Austrian rule, but only in order that they might fix their own yoke more securely upon the necks of their Slavonic and Rumanian subjects. Racialism, not nationalism, was their inspiration.

The Germans of Austria proper had their subject races, quite apart from the Magyars and their vassals. Besides the purely German provinces, the Austrian section of the Dual Monarchy included the Slavonic Czechs of Bohemia and Moravia, who had had their days of greatness and power in the fifteenth century when John Hus was their prophet and Ziska their unconquerable general ; but their national liberties had been ruthlessly crushed by the Austrians in the seventeenth century : during the thirties they were reviving the memories of their ancient greatness, restoring the purity of their language, and preparing like other subject nations to strike for freedom. Austria also controlled the province of Galicia, once part of the kingdom of Poland ; but the Poles formed the majority only in the western part of the province ; in its eastern half Polish nobles ruled over, and were hated by, a serf-population of Ruthenians or Little Russians.

Such was the medley of races and potential nations among which the national idea suddenly began to produce a great fermentation during the

'forties ; it culminated in the amazing and confusing revolution of 1848, which broke out simultaneously among all these conflicting peoples, and most fiercely among the Magyars. A reasonable reorganisation of the Austrian Empire on national lines would have been difficult. But it would not have been impossible. The concession of full local autonomy to each of the principal groups which possessed geographical coherence—the Czechs, the Poles, the Magyars, the Rumanians, the Croats and Serbs—might have been combined with a federal organisation which would have kept the whole Empire together ; and it is not impossible that in course of time the Serbians of free Serbia as well as those who remained under the Turkish yoke, and the Rumanians of Moldavia and Wallachia, might have been willing to join with their brothers under the shelter of a great federal union of the small nationalities which would have solved the national problem in the region where it presents the greatest difficulties, and would have formed a bulwark for the peace of the world. But any such arrangement was rendered impossible by the passion for dominion of the two ruling races, who could not endure to see their subjects placed on a level with themselves, and who would have been outnumbered in the federation as a whole by the vassals who had escaped from their control. So the Magyars preferred to try to establish the freedom of Hungary as a whole from Austrian control, while at the same time they declined to listen to the claims of Croats or Rumans, and even insisted that Magyar should be the one officially recognised language in the law-

courts, the army, and the administrative offices. Consequently the Austrians were able to turn against them the whole strength of the subject peoples ; and in the end none of the peoples gained any advantage at all, and the old system of brutal repression and obscurantism was revived in full. This outcome of the 1848 revolution in the Austrian Empire was, in fact, as great a tragedy for the national cause and for the peace of Europe as the contemporaneous failure of the liberal-nationalist movement in Germany. In the result, the Austrian Empire was gravely weakened, and for that reason was unable to withstand the Italian national movement in 1859–60, and the sudden attack of Prussia in 1866.

The great defeat of 1866 did, however, bring about a reconstruction of the Austrian system, which seemed to give some satisfaction to the national cause, and which was hailed at the time as a great victory. There was some discussion between 1865 and 1867 of the institution of a sort of national-federal system, such as was described above. But this opportunity also was lost, because it did not satisfy the passion for dominion of either of the ruling races ; and the ultimate settlement took the form of the *Ausgleich* or Compromise of 1867, whereby the Dualism of the Dual Monarchy was finally established, and the Magyars acquired complete ascendency in the one half, the German-Austrians in the other half. "You manage your barbarians, and we will manage ours," said the Austrian Chancellor to his Magyar fellow ; and that was the spirit of the settlement. It was a triumph

for raeialism, not for nationalism; it established dominion, not liberty; and henceforth the repression of the subject-peoples within the empire, and hostility to their brethren without, has been the common poliey of Austrians and Hungarians alike; has enabled them to forget their old feuds; and has eaused the Austrian Empire to appear an even more implacable foe of the national eause, and an even greater danger to European peaee, than before 1867.

The effect of this poliey upon the national eause was illustrated in the erisis of 1876–8 in the Turkish empire. In 1876 the Serbs of Bosnia had revolted against the Turks, and were naturally aided by their fellows in free Serbia and Montenegro; at the same time the appalling outrages perpetrated by the Turks in Bulgaria aroused the indignation of most of Europe, and eaused one of the great parties in Britain to break away violently from the traditional poliey of "maintaining the integrity of the Ottoman Empire" and to adopt the view that the Turk must be chased "bag and baggage" out of Europe. Above all, this recrudeseence of Turkish tyranny brought Russia again into the field, after a long interval. The Russo-Turkish war of 1877–8 ended in the eomplete defeat of the Turks, and Turkey was foreed to aeeept a treaty whereby the whole of the area inhabited by the Bulgarians was to be turned into a free state, while the area of free Serbia was to be inereased, and both Serbia and Rumania were no longer to be subjeet to the suzerainty of the Turk.

The solution of the Balkan problem might have

been completed by the union of the revolting Serbs of Bosnia and Herzegovina with free Serbia. But this did not suit the aims of the Austrians, and the Magyars. If a really solid and powerful Serbian realm were to be established just across the Danube, "our barbarians" of the same race, whom it was so difficult to keep in subjection, might become dangerous. The maintenance of racial dominion within the Austrian empire required the denial of national freedom outside. Austria stipulated that Bosnia and Herzegovina should (while remaining part of the Turkish Empire) be placed under the administration of the Dual Monarchy. She also demanded that the Russo-Turkish treaty should be revised; and accordingly a Congress was held at Berlin (with Bismarck to act as "honest broker"), where more than half of the proposed free state of Bulgaria was restored to Turkish misrule, and the remainder was left under Turkish suzerainty. Here, for the first time, Austria and Germany combined to support Turkey in preventing the establishment of national liberty among the long-oppressed peoples of the Balkans. And, unhappily, on this single occasion in the whole history of the national movement, Britain ranged herself against the national cause, because the traditional fear of Russia was still dominant in the minds of the party then in power. "We put our money on the wrong horse," said Lord Salisbury, who was present at Berlin, when, much later, he looked back over British policy in this sphere. It is not likely that the attitude of the British representatives materially affected the result; for the "natural allies" as

Bernhardi calls them, Germany, Austria, and Turkey, the standing foes of national freedom, had at last begun their ill-omened partnership, and the other powers, the traditional friends of nationalism, were as yet on bad terms with one another. But it was an unhappy close to the great era of nationalist advance.

IV

THE LAST MENACE TO NATIONAL FREEDOM

From 1878 onwards, the dominating fact in the history of western civilisation is the growing menace of a new challenge to the liberties of Europe. This menace was not, indeed, apparent to most men during the first twenty years of the period ; but in the light of after events we can see that it was steadily shaping itself throughout these years. The source of the menace was Germany, which, like Spain in the sixteenth century and France under Louis XIV, was a great nation intoxicated by the sense of its own power and drawing its strength from the sentiment of nationality. The vast ambitions of the German nation are to be seen, during these years, gradually assuming clearer definition and gradually losing all sense of proportion. Throughout this period Treitschke (Professor at Berlin 1874–96) was their accepted prophet, eagerly acclaimed by all the governing classes of Germany ; and there is no clearer exponent of that worship of mere power, that ineffable belief in the immeasurable superiority of the German people to

all others, and that utter repudiation of the doctrine of nationality in so far as it attributed "rights" to other nations than the German, which were increasingly becoming the dominant political ideas of the controlling elements among the German people.

For Treitschke the nationhood of Germany was a sacred thing; but this sacredness did not extend to the nationhood of other peoples. He held that it was the "highest moral obligation" of the state to extend its own power, by all means available, and above all by the divinely appointed method of war; and against this "highest moral obligation" no restraints were valid, not even the formal pledges of treaties, and least of all the "rights" of other nationalities. For in his eyes the "rights" of a nation were only to be measured by its power, and he held it to be a law of nature that little states, whether they were nations or not, should be subjugated by great states. These doctrines amounted to a direct denial of the principle of nationality, towards which western civilisation had been unconsciously working during many centuries, and which had at last, during the nineteenth century, obtained a clear definition and a general acceptance, everywhere save in Germany, Austria, and Turkey. And the fact that the German bid for world-power was thus, unlike its predecessors, a quite conscious and open defiance of the principle of nationality, made the issue a more definite one than ever before. The national principle had been defined and expounded; now it was to be repudiated and destroyed. That is what makes the Great War the culmination of modern history so far as concerns

the development of the idea of nationality; and that is what makes the events of these years of conscious or unconscious preparation for the great challenge so vitally important in the history of this idea.

For a bid for world-power, which must necessarily involve the destruction of national freedom, the obvious tools of Germany were at hand in the two anti-national empires of Austria and Turkey. And the obvious sphere for her first efforts to express and extend her power was presented by that confused area in which the national spirit had not yet achieved a full victory, the Balkan peninsula, where Germany's two tools had both undergone defeats or disappointments. Accordingly the Balkan area forms the chief field of German activity as soon as the great programme begins to be undertaken; here she finds the means for reducing her allies to dependence upon her by helping them to maintain the chaos from which all three hoped to derive profit. That is to say, the region where the national principle had failed fully to establish itself presented, as in the eighteenth century, the obvious field for the activities of the aggressive factors which threatened the peace of Europe.

It is important to grasp clearly which were the regions of Europe where the national principle had not yet achieved satisfaction at the opening of the new age; a rapid summary will suffice for the purpose. First there was the group of Balkan states, in which the aspiration after nationhood had been aroused to intensity, but only partially satisfied. Rumania, Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria were

now nation-states. But the free Rumanians saw the majority of their brothers condemned to subjection under foreign rule, either under the Russians in Bessarabia, or, in much larger numbers, under the harsh dominion of the Magyars in Transylvania. The free Greek state included less than half of the Greek nation ; the rest remained under the hated yoke of the Turk. Free Serbia and free Montenegro formed only small fragments of the lands occupied by the Serbian people : some of them (in Old Serbia and Novibazar) were still under Turkish rule, but the great majority were under the unsympathetic government of the Magyars and the Austrians, in Slavonia, Croatia, Dalmatia, and (since 1878) in Bosnia and Herzegovina ; and the Bosnian Serbs so hated their subjection to their new masters that it was only after long fighting that they were reduced to a sullen submission. The Bulgarians, youngest of the nation-states, had seen national unity within their grasp only to be snatched away from them, and the Bulgaria of 1878 included not more than half of the Bulgarian nation. All these peoples were in a disturbed and restless condition. But these were not the only nationalist difficulties still surviving in Europe. The Bohemian nation was growing yearly more intensely conscious of its nationhood, and more impatient of the hard Austrian dominion. The unhappy Poles had never reconciled themselves to the division and the denial of their nationhood, to which they had been sentenced by their three neighbours, Germany, Austria, and (especially) Russia. The brutality with which Germany had torn Alsace and Lorraine from France

had left a bleeding wound in the side of that proud nation, and the insolence and harshness with which the conquered provinces were treated made it impossible for the wound to heal over. Finally, the unification of the Italian nation, though more nearly perfect than that of any other of the new nation-states, was not quite complete. The Austrians had retained fragments of Italian territory, in the Tridentine and the district of Trieste; and though these districts were small, they were important because they commanded the frontiers of Italy strategically. Their retention by Austria kept alive the traditional hatred of Italy for Austria, and made war between these powers an always possible event. Thus on all hands the incomplete satisfaction of the national principle had sown the seeds of future trouble, and left a field for the aggressive activities of an expanding power.

The period from 1878 to the outbreak of the Great War in 1914 falls into three clearly marked sections. The first of these covers the last twelve years of Bismarck's government. Throughout these years the influence of Treitschke and his disciples was at its height, but the world remained unperturbed; Treitschke was a Professor, and, except in Germany, the world has never condescended to take Professors seriously. The world, indeed, took at its face value Bismarck's assertion that Germany was a "satiated power," which desired no further conquests. It was undisturbed, it even rejoiced, at the extraordinary system of alliances which the Iron Chancellor built up during these years, and which gave to Germany an unexampled supremacy

in European affairs. Austria in 1879 was persuaded by her fear of Russia, Italy in 1882 by her jealousy of French expansion in northern Africa, to join in the creation of the most formidable standing alliance that has ever existed in European history. Yet the other powers took no alarm : British statesmen even welcomed the alliance as a safeguard of peace ; and Bismarck was able to negotiate also the secret " Reinsurance " treaty with Russia, and to maintain an excellent understanding with Britain. Never has any European state enjoyed a more dominating position than Germany enjoyed in this period. Under Bismarck's direction it was used for peaceful ends, because Bismarck knew that Germany needed an interval to assimilate her new-made system, and to develop her material resources. But the traditional spirit of Prussia had not changed. Did no one fear what use might be made of this dominating position if it were turned to aggressive ends—if the doctrine of Treitschke represented the real mind of Germany ? Apparently no one did, except in France. And this confidence appeared to be justified by the moderation of Bismarck's policy. In particular he carefully abstained from stirring up trouble in the Balkans, in which he professed to take no interest ; indeed, he made use of his strange double alliance with Austria against Russia, and with Russia against Austria, to prevent either of these powers from stirring up the hornets' nest.

But this period of German omnipotence moderately used came suddenly to an end ; and its close was immediately marked by the beginning of German activity in the Balkans. From 1890

onwards the Balkans are no longer "not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier," they are the pivot of German foreign policy. The most powerful state of Europe, buttressed by the most formidable standing alliance that has ever existed, began to be attracted by the possibility of extending its Power, and therefore of fulfilling its "highest moral obligation," by exploiting the confusion of the unnationalised area. Henceforth the alliance with Austria is no longer to be used as a means of checking Austria's Balkan ambition. The two predatory powers are to work hand in hand, for the purpose of obtaining the mastery not only over the Balkans, but over the whole Turkish empire.

The suddenness of the change may be indicated by a few dates. In 1888 the Kaiser William II succeeded to the Imperial Throne, and in his first proclamation to the army promised never to forget "that the eyes of my ancestors (creators of an empire by force and fraud) are looking down upon me from the other world, and that one day I shall have to render to them an account both of the glory and of the honour of the Army." In 1889 the Kaiser paid a formal visit to the Sultan Abdul Hamid, being the first European sovereign to do so; and kissed that murderer on both cheeks. In 1890 Bismarck, the statesman who despised Balkan questions, was dismissed from power with insult. In the same year the "Reinsurance" treaty with Russia, which had formed a sort of guarantee that Germany would not support the Balkan policy of Austria, was denounced. In 1891 negotiations began between France and Russia,

which culminated in the Franco-Russian alliance, made public in 1894; obviously the cause of this change was the Russian dislike of Germany's new policy in Balkan affairs. In 1891 was founded the Pan-German League, and Germany began to be deluged with fire-eating pamphlets. In 1897 came the Kaiser's second visit to Abdul Hamid—paid, significantly enough, at the time of the Armenian Massacres, when the other European powers were striving to bring pressure on the Turk. After having thus ostentatiously flouted Europe, and posed as the benefactor of Turkey, the Kaiser went on to Damascus, and announced that he was the protector of all the Mahomedans in the world—the vast majority of them being subjects of Britain, France, and Russia. And meanwhile German and Austrian companies were steadily getting control over the bulk of the Turkish railway system; and German officers were reorganising the Turkish army; it was their instruction which enabled the Turks to inflict a crushing defeat on Greece in 1897, and thus to check the nationalist movement in that country.

Nor was it only the little Balkan states and their protector Russia that had reason to be perturbed in these years. In 1895 came the Kaiser's telegram to Kruger, congratulating him on the defeat of the Jameson raid "without the aid of friendly powers." In 1897 the Navy League was founded to advocate the creation of an irresistible German fleet, and Admiral von Tirpitz, its patron, became Secretary of the Navy; in 1898 came the first great German naval programme; before it was completed, and

in the middle of the Boer War, the programme was doubled by the Navy Act of 1900. These large expenditures were stimulated by high-heroics from the Emperor : " I will never rest until I have raised my Navy to a position similar to that occupied by my Army " : " Germany's colonial aims can only be gained when Germany has become lord of the ocean " : " The Trident must be in *our* hands " : " Our future lies upon the water." It is needless to pursue these details further : the ten years following 1890 ought to have made it plain to all but the wilfully blind that Germany, with her mighty army and her powerful alliances, was contemplating a bid for world-power, and that in the meanwhile she was striving to establish her ascendency in the vexed, because unnationalised, region of the Balkans, and to create a navy that should be able to defy the sea-power which has broken all previous attempts of this kind. The Kaiser might make peace-speeches, for this inveterate *poseur* under the limelight fancied himself almost as much in the rôle of Angel of Peace as in the rôle of the Irresistible War Lord, wearer of Shining Armour, and wielder of the Destructive Sword. But the peace-speeches were words : the domineering, unscrupulous diplomacy, the unresting, assiduous military preparations were deeds.

Accordingly in the third period, from 1900 onwards, we see the threatened powers gradually taking alarm. The great nation-states, hitherto mutually distrustful, are at pains to remove their differences : Britain and France, after a long and needless alienation, became good friends again in

the Entente of 1904 ; Britain and Russia obliterated their far more deep-seated differences in 1907, and the Triple Entente was henceforth ranged against the Triple Alliance : not indeed as a formal allied group of powers, for there was no agreement for warlike co-operation between Britain and either of the other members of the Entente ; they co-operated in the constant and anxious diplomacy of the period because they felt themselves to be threatened ; because they were being driven unwillingly to the conclusion that the fourth great challenge to the liberties of Europe was at hand. And the episodes of the Morocco crises in 1905 and 1911 showed what serious grounds they had for these fears. Even more striking, Italy, the type of a free nation-state, began during these years, as the true aims of German statecraft were progressively revealed, to draw away from her unnatural association with the predatory powers. She did not, indeed, withdraw from the Triple Alliance, but she acted more and more independently of it. She deserted her allies in the Morocco crisis of 1905. She assumed no shining armour in the Bosnian crisis of 1909. Her attack on the Turkish province of Tripoli was an acute annoyance for the predatory powers, because it endangered their control over the Turks. Writing in 1911, General Bernhardi was constrained to admit that the Central Powers could not count upon the assistance of Italy in the great undertaking which he foresaw and described ; and his anticipation was more than justified by the events. For the state which was the embodiment of the pure idea of Nationalism preached by Mazzini

there was only one side possible in the life-and-death struggle for the national principle that was now looming ahead.

Meanwhile (and more important for our immediate purpose) the growing German ascendancy, the systematic German development of the power of Turkey, and the increasing aggressiveness of Austria, produced a rising anxiety and disturbance among the little Balkan states, which saw the possibility of a fulfilment of their national aspirations being withdrawn from before their eyes. It was Serbia, the next neighbour to Austria, and the obstacle in her way to Salonika and the Ægean Sea, that felt the danger soonest, and was most deeply affected by it. In 1903 took place the murder of the worthless king and queen of Serbia, an episode which damaged the Serbs irretrievably in the eyes of Europe. Yet this was not a mere vulgar murder, like many which disfigure the annals of other countries. The murdered king, the last of the Obrenovitch line, had been a creature of Austria. His successor was the descendant of Kara George, the leader of the first Serbian national rising against the Turks; and this unsavoury episode meant that the Nationalist (and anti-Austrian) party had got the upper hand.

In 1907 came the Young Turk revolution, which, to begin with, certainly aimed at reorganising the Turkish empire so as to save it from external control; and at the moment its success was undeniably a grave blow to the German ascendancy at Constantinople. But the Young Turk leaders were corrupt; their high-sounding constitutional

programme was soon found to be only a veneer for the old tyranny; and in a short time German influence was completely re-established.

In 1909 Austria, treating as "a mere scrap of paper" the treaty of 1878, declared the Serbian provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina permanently annexed to her empire. By this high-handed act a European war was nearly precipitated; but Russia was still suffering from the effects of the Japanese War, and Germany, with the gesture of a chivalrous knight, protected the treaty-breaker by announcing that "she stood beside her ally in shining armour." On little Serbia, who saw the last chance of union with her brother Serbs of Bosnia thus snatched away, the annexation had an electrifying effect. It awakened the nationalist spirit to a passionate intensity, and nationalist societies began to work both in Serbia itself and in the Serb provinces of Austria. This, of course, was an intolerable menace to Austria, who not only complained to the powers of the wickedness of the Serbs in desiring national reunion, just as, fifty years before, she had complained of the Italians, but proposed to seize the opportunity for crushing Serbia once for all. The "evidence" which was to justify this aggression on a small power was deliberately fabricated in the Austrian embassy at Belgrad, as was subsequently proved before Austrian law-courts in the celebrated Friedjung trial. But for one reason or another the villain blow planned in 1909 did not come off: probably Germany forbade, wishing to await the moment when she should be ready for a still greater stroke. Nor did another

similar project of 1911 ; nor one of 1913, which was communicated to Italy, and wrecked on her disapproval. But the whole series of episodes served to show that no scruples would be allowed to stand in the way of the Austro-German schemes for obtaining supremacy in the Balkans, and that the little incomplete nation-states need hope for no mercy if they fell into the hands of such masters.

They learnt their lesson ; and forgetting their mutual jealousies, formed in 1912 the Balkan League, and resolved to attack and destroy the power of the Turk before it should be re-established under German influence. Their rapid victories electrified Europe, and constituted a grave defeat for Austro-German policy. For if the Balkan League should be able practically to drive the Turk out of Europe, and should thereafter hold together, this victory of the national principle would destroy every chance of carrying out the great scheme, which depended upon keeping these states weak, and disunited by their mutual jealousies.

Accordingly German and Austrian policy devoted itself to driving a wedge between the allies ; and they had a great advantage in the position and ambitions of the ruler of the Bulgarians, a German princeling and ex-Austrian officer, who had no share of Bulgarian national sentiment, but dreamed of carving out for himself a dominating position in the Balkans by the same methods which Prussia had employed in Germany. It was easy to stir up the long-standing feud between the Serbs and the Bulgars. At the Conference of London, where the terms of peace were settled, Austria and Germany

refused to allow Serbia to obtain the access to the Adriatic coast by way of Albania which the League had agreed upon as part of her share of the war's results, and threatened war if this was persisted in. Serbia naturally demanded compensation ; naturally demanded also an outlet for her trade which should be independent of Austrian control. She was given the region of Macedonia through which passed the railway to Salonika. But this territory, being mainly inhabited by Bulgars, was to have been part of Bulgaria's share. Austria and Germany, who had no desire to see the hostile Serbs in control of the route to Salonika, but whose attitude had made this arrangement necessary, next proceeded to express profound sympathy with Bulgaria, whom they found no difficulty in convincing that she alone was responsible for the victory over the Turks. They encouraged her to take the territory which she claimed by force of arms ; and thus followed the miserable Second Balkan war of 1913.

It was doubtless a disappointment to the German and Austrian intriguers when Bulgaria was completely defeated ; but the main object had been gained. The Balkan League was broken up. Its members were again in the desirable state of mutual hostility and distrust ; and, divided, they could form no serious obstacle when the time came for the great attempt : they might even, by sufficiently skilful and unscrupulous diplomacy, be made useful. Germany and Austria did not themselves intervene in this crisis. Austria, indeed, contemplated an attack on Serbia, but was held back by her ally.

She was held back because the Day had not yet arrived. The military preparations upon which Germany had been strenuously engaged ever since 1911, passing a new army act in each year, were not completed; the Kiel canal, which was being widened for the passage of Dreadnoughts, would not be ready till June, 1914. For Austria the Balkans were the main interest; for Germany only a stepping-stone; only the occasion for the greater stroke, and she was therefore eager to maintain peace, provided it was a sufficiently troubled peace, until all was ready.

In June, 1914, all things were ready; but the Balkans were quiet. It was important, from the German point of view, that a Balkan question should be used as the occasion for the great blow for world-power; for on any other issue it was not certain that Germany would be able to count upon the whole-hearted co-operation of Austria. She also hoped that since Britain had repeatedly declared (especially in 1909) that she would not go to war on a Balkan question, British neutrality might be secured if a Balkan pretext were employed.

In June, 1914, the Kiel Canal was ready, the big guns were ready, the stores of munitions were ready, the Zeppelins were in their sheds, and all preparations were made for calling out vast numbers of troops on the pretext that manœuvres on an unprecedented scale were to be held in Hesse, conveniently near the French border. At this extraordinarily apposite moment the heir to the Austrian crown visited Sarajevo, the capital of the dis-

contented Serb province of Bosnia. This Archduke had married a Slav wife, and was reputed to be a sympathiser with the Slav subjects of Austria and Hungary : he had even advocated the cutting away of the southern Slav provinces from both Austria and Hungary, and the erection of a third member of the dual monarchy, which should give Home Rule to both "our barbarians" and "your barbarians." For this reason he was very sincerely detested by the Magyars and by the dominant politicians in Austria. They regarded him as a grave obstacle to their repressive policy, and dreaded his succession to the aged Emperor.

The Archduke came to the unrestful town of Sarajevo at so exactly the right moment that it almost appears as if he had resolved to offer himself as a sacrifice to the ambitions of his country—or as if somebody else had resolved on the sacrifice for him. By a strange oversight, the authorities had neglected to provide any guards in this unrestful and disloyal town : the Archduke twice bitterly commented on the omission. And, as might have been expected, he was murdered. His murder was extraordinarily convenient to the governing cliques in Austria and Hungary, but it was an unmitigated disaster to Serbia. The murderers were Serbs, but Austrian subjects, and the Serbian government had warned the Austrian government against one of them. The actual murderer was arrested and tried ; he was found guilty and sentenced—to a term of imprisonment. His horrible deed was a godsend to the Central Powers. It gave Austria an excuse for crushing Serbia, and Germany a lever for forcing

on the European war. Germans and Austrians alike agreed in laying all the responsibility on Serbia ; and though Serbia made the most abject submission, the occasion was not to be neglected. The Great War began.

Can there be any doubt that the war was immediately occasioned by the determination of the Central Powers to prevent the triumph of the national principle in the one region of Europe where its triumph was most needed ? Can there be any doubt that the war could never have taken place if the national cause had been completely successful in this region ? If the Serbian people had been united, or even if they had possessed only that additional strength which they would have drawn from the inclusion of the Serbs of Bosnia and Herzegovina ; if the settlement after the Balkan War had been permitted to follow the lines agreed upon by the Balkan states themselves, and the bitter hostility between them brought about by the breach of these terms had been avoided ; if the Balkan League had remained effective ; if Turkey had been reduced to impotence so that she was no longer a useful ally : is it not highly improbable that the great challenge would have been delivered ? This much at least is all but certain : that if Germany had been unable to play upon the Balkan ambitions of her ally, the ramshackle Austrian empire would never have risked the perils of the great adventure ; and without any ally at all, even Germany, with all her might, would scarcely have dared to make her bid for world-dominion.

The Great War is the last, and the greatest, and

the most definite and decisive, challenge to and defiance of the national cause in Europe. It is an attack upon the liberties of the most ancient and firmly established of the nation-states ; it is, in essence, a repudiation of the idea that the strength and progress of European civilisation is largely derived from that variety of culture which the national system maintains, and an insolent assertion of the right of one single *kultur* to impose its methods and its hideous moral standards upon all. But this challenge has only been possible because the national principle has not yet been fully established ; and its full establishment must therefore be an indispensable condition of lasting peace.

While Germany and her allies, Austria and Turkey, stand now, and long have stood, as the supreme opponents of the national cause, there are ranged against them Britain and France, the two most ancient of the European nation-states, and the steadiest friends of the national principle; Italy, the most perfect example of the true national spirit, untarnished by the vulgarity of racialism, which the nationalist movements of the nineteenth century have produced ; Russia, which though in some grave instances she has been the enemy of the national cause, has yet been its most steadfast friend in the unhappy region of the Balkans ; Japan, the only purely national state in the non-European world ; Belgium and Serbia, little nations that have by their own heroism vindicated their title to nationhood. And this group of nation-states has formally declared that it is fighting for the national principle.

If it be true—and who will deny it?—that the trend towards the adoption of the nation as the only healthy basis for the state wherever the potentiality of nationhood exists, has been one of the dominant features of modern history, then, indeed, in this respect we may say that the Great War is the culmination of modern history; and no war that has ever been fought on this planet has had its fundamental issues more clearly and unmistakably revealed.

III

INTERNATIONALISM

I

THE COSMOPOLITAN IDEAL OF THE MIDDLE AGES AND ITS BREAKDOWN

VARIETY in unity has been the note of European civilisation, and the secret of its vitality: variety of national types upon an underlying unity of moral and political ideas. We have seen that over-emphasis upon the aspect of unity had produced the decadence and ultimate downfall of the Roman Empire. Yet during the Middle Ages, despite the chaos of feudal principalities, the sense of the unity of Christendom was still very strong, and was still, in the judgment of the best men, the most noble and inspiring of all political conceptions. This unity had its formal expression in the most august institutions of the West. On the secular side it was represented by the Holy Roman Empire, which was in fact never more than an aspiration and an ideal, but which was capable of arousing a sincere devotion in noble minds like Dante's. Even if the Holy Roman Empire was never able to do anything towards establishing the Reign of Law

among warring states, its mere existence was a perpetual reminder and challenge.

But as the basis of the unity of Christendom was moral, religious, and intellectual rather than political, it was the Church which gave to it its supreme expression. So long as the unity of the Church continued, all Europe had a common body of beliefs expressed in a common language; in every shrine from Bergen to Palermo and from Königsberg to Cadiz the same holy offices were performed in the same tongue; the priest or the monk found himself equally at home wherever he might go; the scholar could wander freely from Bologna to Paris, from Salamanca to Oxford, without being sensible of any material change of atmosphere; and it seemed perfectly natural that the Frenchman Gerbert should become Archbishop of Ravenna, that the Italian Lanfranc should be Archbishop of Canterbury and act as the chief adviser of an English king, that the Englishman Harding should govern the French abbey of Citeaux, or that the German Norbert should establish the headquarters of his new order of Canons in France.

Even on the political side the Church was able to give strength and reality to the unity of Christendom. It could send forth armies drawn from all the lands of the West to combat the Infidel in the long series of Crusades. And above all, it provided Europe with a supreme and universally accepted arbiter upon all ultimate moral issues, a supreme exponent of the common moral conceptions of the West. Herein lay the political value of the Papal sovereignty. A great pope like Innocent III was

able in some degree to impose the Rule of Right upon the most powerful princes ; he could release subjects from their allegiance to wicked or contumacious rulers ; he could by an interdict outlaw whole peoples from the *respublica Christiana*, the commonwealth of civilisation ; he could be appealed to on vexed questions as a final court of arbitration ; he could in some degree maintain the usages of civilised war. So long as the seamless garment of the Universal Church remained unrent, and the Pope was accepted as the mouthpiece of the common conscience of the western world, the unity of European civilisation had a visible and powerful embodiment, and the relations of states towards one another were in theory always, and in practice often, determined by higher considerations than those which influence the beasts of the jungle. The value attached to this function of the Papacy is shown by the fact that even after the Papacy had been discredited by the Babylonish captivity, by the great schism, and by the acrimonious debates of the fifteenth century Councils, its arbitral authority was still accepted. Alexander Borgia, the worst man who ever sat upon the papal throne, could make an award dividing the non-European world between Spain and Portugal ; and this award was on the whole loyally accepted by the rest of Europe for a generation, and never openly defied until the Reformation had destroyed for half of Europe the papal authority.

But during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there had in fact been a progressive weakening of the sense of the unity of Christendom and of respect

for its visible embodiments, and with the coming of the Modern Age it seemed suddenly to have broken down altogether. This, indeed, is one of the chief marks of the third age of western civilisation. In the first age the whole civilised world was firmly organised in a single all-powerful state. In the second age the sentiment of unity was still strong, and men longed for the restoration of the old single rule; but they had to be content with an incomplete expression of it, a merely moral influence, not backed by sufficient force to be able to dictate its will. In the third age all effective political expression of the unity of civilisation seems at first to disappear altogether, and even the desire for it seems to die out: the sentiment of national freedom comes to appear, to the mass of men, a much nobler and more holy thing than the sentiment of the brotherhood of all civilised peoples.

Three factors in especial contributed to bring about the downfall of the old cosmopolitan idea during the modern age. The first of these was the political theory of the Renascence, which got its most complete expression from Machiavelli. The most outstanding aspect of the Renascence age is the extraordinary relaxation of moral obligations by which it was marked, and this in its turn was due to the extraordinary emphasis which the Humanists laid upon the value of personality, and the idolatry which they felt for Power, for the power of the artist imposing his own conceptions upon stubborn materials, and the power of the statesman enforcing his will upon his still more stubborn fellow-men. Self-expression was the ideal

of the best men in the new age, as self-repression had been the ideal of the best men in the mediæval period. Liberty rather than Law became the object of idolatry; but this worshipped Liberty was a lawless liberty, reckless of the claims of other men, regardless of moral restraints; and the ideal of the Renascence, which on its political side is developed in Machiavelli's *Prince*, is not unlike the ideal of Nietzsche, the dream of a sort of superman, bound by no restraints of an outworn morality in the expression of his own personality, and using the common herd of men merely as the material for this self-expression. Throughout the modern age this doctrine of Power has had its attraction for men and for peoples. The doctrine of Machiavelli is the lineal ancestor of the doctrine of Treitschke, with this single difference, that for Treitschke it is the State, and not the individual Prince or superman that is the wielder of Power, exempt from the restraints of the morality of the herd. But the doctrine of Power has never had a more forcible expression than it got from Machiavelli, or a more general acceptance in practice than it received from the Renascence age. And such a doctrine was by its very nature hostile to the idea of an organised unity of the civilised world based upon common moral ideas.

The second factor destructive of the conception of the unity of the *respublica Christiana* was the Reformation, which for half of Europe uprooted the authority of the Papacy, and therefore robbed Europe as a whole of the last surviving political expression of its unity. But having destroyed the

long-accepted source of authority as to the meaning and nature of the moral obligations incumbent upon all Christians, the Reformers had to find a new arbiter. It was not enough to define the Bible, or the early Councils up to an arbitrarily fixed date, as the sole rule of life ; there must be an interpreter of these authorities, for only the most extravagant of Protestants ever ventured to assert in an extreme form the right of private judgment as vested in the individual. Who now shall be the arbiter of the moral law that is common to all men ? Luther's answer was, in effect, " each Prince within his own territory " ; and this decision was in fact the ultimate decision arrived at at the end of the long wars of religion in Germany : *cujus regio ejus religio*. Thus the German or Lutheran answer to this profound problem seemed to amount to the destruction of the moral unity of Christendom. The English answer was not far different ; at first the king, then the nation acting through its repre sentatives, undertook the control of the consciences of all citizens ; while in the lands which adopted the Calvinist form of Protestantism a more democratically constituted body, but still a body having authority solely within a single state, exercised control over doctrine and discipline. Now of course all this did not mean that the community of ideas characteristic of western civilisation had been destroyed ; it was too deeply rooted for this to be possible. But it did mean that it was in some degree weakened ; that it had largely lost the religious sanction which had hitherto upheld it ; that there was no longer any authorised exponent of

it, or any authority which could express the condemnation of the conscience of civilisation against the prince or the people who defied its dictates. Each prince, each state, became the sole arbiter of the rightcousness of its own actions. And in this sense Luther's teaching may be said to have helped to establish the doctrine that the state is the ultimate source of moral sanctions. The most modern exponent of this doctrine is Treitschke: and Treitschke recognises that his thought owes almost as much to Luther as it does to Machiavelli.

But the most important of all the factors which at the beginning of the Modern Age were apparently undermining the unity of civilisation was the growing strength of the sentiment of nationality, and the steady increase in the number of the organised nation-states. The self-sufficiency of the nation-states, and their willingness to repudiate the long-admitted right of the conscience of united Christendom to impose limits upon their actions and their methods, were of course intensified by the influence of the two other factors, by the political theories of the Renascence, and by the assertion of spiritual autonomy made possible by the Reformation. Yet already, during the mediæval period, the papacy had found in the national spirit of England and France the chief obstacle to the effective realisation of its moral sovereignty over Europe. In proportion as the sentiment of nationality grew in strength, the sentiment of the unity of civilisation seemed to decay. The satisfaction of national aspirations, first after freedom and unity, then after domination, came to be during the modern age the

most powerful of political motives ; in comparison with which the dream of the world-state, or of the brotherhood of all civilised states, seemed to be mere sentimentalism. It was chiefly in the unnationalised areas, and especially in Germany, that cosmopolitan ideas still obtained general acceptance, but this was due to the hopeless political disintegration of the country. The enthusiasm of German scholars and men of letters during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for the visionary ideals of cosmopolitanism was only a part of that " kingdom of the air," with which, as Heine said, Germany had to console herself while France enjoyed the kingdom of the land, and England the kingdom of the seas.

For these reasons the first three centuries of the modern age were filled with almost unceasing wars between the members of the European comity; from the time of Charles VIII's invasion of Italy in 1494, which may be taken as the beginning of the rivalry of nation-states, to the overthrow of Napoleon in 1815, the intervals during which all Europe was at peace were few, and very brief. Almost ceaseless war seemed in the modern age to have become the normal condition of Europe, and the wars of this age have been vastly wider in their range than the petty feudal strife of the Middle Age. It was no wonder that thinking men regarded this state of things as representing the bankruptcy of western civilisation, and that philosophers and poets longed for the destruction of national divisions, and for the re-establishment of a *Cosmopolis*, a world-state which should embody and strengthen the indestructible

unity of the *respublica Christiana*. But the days of the world-state were gone for ever. The last attempt to re-establish it, made by the Emperor Charles V, was broken by the strength of nationality in France, and by the disintegrating force of the Reformation in Germany. If Europe was to find any political method of expressing the essential unity of its civilisation, it must be in some new form that would respect the freedom and independence of the nation-states. Internationalism must take the place of Cosmopolitanism. But Internationalism could not exist until Nationalism had established itself. Europe, which did not until the nineteenth century become fully conscious of the meaning and strength of the national idea, was naturally slow to adapt itself to this conception, and still hankered after the dream of the World-State.

Nevertheless, throughout the modern period, despite the unceasing wars, there is a continuous effort towards some new method of embodying in laws and institutions the unity of Europe. And, upon the whole, it is possible to perceive some progress in the nature of these ideas, if not in the success of their realisation. As time passes, the dreams of the Cosmopolitans become less visionary, because they recognise more fully the claims of the nation-states; until, in the nineteenth century, the international idea begins at last to assume practical form, and to achieve real and solid successes. In dealing with the fortunes of the national idea we saw that most of the nation-states actually shaped themselves under the pressure of immediate

necessity, long before the theory of nationhood obtained any clear expression ; and that it was not until the nineteenth century that the idea took the form of a clearly realised and conquering doctrine. Much the same has been the fortune of the international idea ; and we shall therefore find it convenient to break the story of its development into these two sections ; a long period of preparation and half-unconscious experiment down to 1815, a shorter period of bolder attempts and of bigger achievements during the hundred years following 1815.

II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL IDEA TO 1815

The movement towards internationalism has had for its chief aim the establishment of the Reign of Law in the relationship between states. The most obvious aspect of the Reign of Law in the relationship between the citizens of a state is the avoidance of overt strife between them, and the substitution of the reasoned decision of justice for the arbitrament of force ; and therefore the movement towards internationalism is ultimately a movement for the organisation of permanent peace. But the establishment of the Reign of Law even between individuals in a state has only been attained by slow stages. In primitive societies the blood feud still survives, and all that the state attempts is to

regulate the conditions under which it may be legitimately carried on. Even these conditions are only imposed by custom, and ultimately rest for their validity upon public opinion ; and it is only by the growth of opinion recognising the wastefulness and stupidity of such conflict that the state is enabled gradually to increase its restrictions, until ultimately it is able to do away with private war altogether. First the state offers arbitration between its opposing citizens, and draws up a tariff of compensations for injuries (like the *wergilds* of our ancestors) which it invites the opposing parties to accept. Then it insists upon their accepting this sort of decision, but it still, until a surprisingly late date, allows debated points to be decided by trial by battle as a legal process. In some respects—in matters affecting the " honour " or " vital interest " of the parties concerned—the appeal to force by individuals was permitted by public opinion and winked at by the state even in England until very recent times. The Governor-General of British India fought a duel with the leading member of his Council in 1780 ; two members of a British cabinet, Canning and Castlereagh, decided their differences by an appeal to arms in 1809 ; later still Sir Robert Peel challenged Daniel O'Connell to a duel. Even to-day German students and French politicians habitually resort to pistols or swords, and public opinion supports them in doing so. When the most highly civilised states have found it to be so slow and toilsome a business to establish the Reign of Law among their citizens, it is by no means surprising that the progress of the movement towards

an international Reign of Law has been still more slow.

There were three main ways in which the desire of men for the prevention of war and the organisation of an international comity expressed itself during the first three centuries of the modern age.

In the first place there was a succession of schemes for the establishment of a common authority for all Europe which (without encroaching upon the internal affairs of individual states) should be able to compel them to live peaceably together. It was natural that this aim should first engage the attention of reformers, partly because the ideal of the Holy Roman Empire was still a living memory, partly because the analogy of the state suggested that there was little hope of the acceptance of the Reign of Law until there should exist some body capable of enforcing it. But all these schemes were doomed to fail, because they necessarily started with the assumption that the state-units of Europe could be, and ought to be, regarded as permanent and unalterable; whereas, under the impulse not only of princely ambitions, but still more of the healthy aspirations of divided or subjugated nations, the units of the European comity have undergone a continual process of change throughout the modern age, and only those of them which were firmly based upon national lines of division were free from these vicissitudes. Until the lines of division between states should rest upon a clearly defined principle capable of arousing the loyalty of their subjects, the assumption that these lines of division could be regarded as permanent

was an illegitimate assumption, and all proposals based upon it were doomed beforehand to failure.

Nevertheless it is worth while to glance at some of these abortive schemes, if only to show how continuous and how pathetically earnest has been the desire of Europe for the organisation of peace.

The earliest of these schemes which deserves mention was that of the great French statesman the Duc de Sully, first minister of France under King Henry IV, at the beginning of the seventeenth century. When Sully wrote, Europe had been engaged in practically continuous war for more than a century, on a scale never known in the Middle Ages. The hideous wastefulness and the apparent futility of these struggles weighed upon the mind of Sully, and perhaps also of his master. After Henry IV's death and his own retirement, Sully set forth in his *Memoirs* an elaborate scheme for the reconstruction of Europe, which he said the late king had entertained, and would have put into operation if he had lived long enough. There is no ground for supposing that Henry IV, an eminently practical and humorous-minded man, had ever entertained so vast and chimerical a project as Sully attributed to him. But it is at the least very significant that Sully himself, a grave politician of great ability and long experience, should have thought such a scheme at once desirable and possible.

The first condition of this Grand Design was the overthrow of the House of Habsburg, which had appeared, in the previous century, to be on the point of making itself master of Europe, and which

had not, when Sully wrote, abandoned that ambition. No permanent peace would be possible for Europe, Sully felt, until it was freed from the danger of being dominated by the will of a single power. Sully breaks away frankly from the old idea of a single world-state. The autonomy of the individual states, and their authority over their citizens, must be preserved. At the same time the unity of the *respublica Christiana* must be somehow secured, and permanent peace must be maintained among the states which formed its members. But since the old ideal of a single world-state under the joint rule of the Emperor and the Pope was now manifestly dead, this could only be achieved, under the conditions of modern Europe, by co-operation among the autonomous states. Sully therefore proposed that Europe should be divided into six groups of contiguous states, each group having a council to regulate the relations of its members, while a general assembly representing the whole of Europe should meet annually in each of the principal cities of Europe in turn, hear appeals from the lesser councils, and generally be responsible for the avoidance of war. From this common organisation of the civilised world two regions of Europe were to be excluded—Russia, which Sully regarded as a backward and barbarous country, as indeed it still was, and the Ottoman Empire, which he regarded as the enemy of civilisation. The only war henceforth to be permitted was to be a war undertaken by Europe as a whole for the purpose of destroying the Turkish power, and freeing the Christian peoples who suffered under the Turkish yoke.

This grandiose scheme was of course wholly impracticable in the seventeenth century, or at any other time. But it deserves more respectful consideration than it has generally received. It was the first serious attempt to reconcile the two conflicting demands of Europe: the demand for national independence, and the demand for a common organisation to maintain peace between all civilised peoples. Sully did not expressly recognise the national principle: it was not to be expected that he should, since, as we have seen, there was no conscious expression of that principle before the nineteenth century. But he shows a dim sense of its importance, for his six subordinate groups of states do in a vague way represent broad lines of national affinity: the multitudinous states of Germany formed one of them, Italy another, the Scandinavian states a third. He deserves the credit of having seen that the old cosmopolitan idea, the idea of a world-state, represented by the Roman Empire, must be abandoned in face of the strength of the passion for independence in the new nation-states; but that, at the same time, some new mode of organisation, of an international rather than a cosmopolitan kind, was necessary to satisfy the aspirations of enlightened men.

While Sully wrote, the Thirty Years' War, which was the most desolating and the most wide-ranging that Europe had yet experienced, was about to begin; and from that time onwards there was no decade during the next hundred years during which all the states of Europe were at peace. The next century opened in the midst of the long struggle

against the vast ambition of Louis XIV. But when the struggle had once more proved on the one hand that the spirit of national independence would not submit to the dominion of any single power, and on the other hand that Europe was doomed to suffer fruitless waste and suffering through the absence of any means of enforcing the general will for peace, there again appeared an ambitious scheme for the effective organisation of the *respublica Christiana*. This time the scheme was not limited to the posthumous memoirs of a retired statesman divested of all responsibility, and was not described as something that might have happened in happier circumstances. It was put forward by an actual diplomatist, a negotiator at the Congress which readjusted the map of Europe at the end of the Spanish Succession War; and it was seriously advocated by its author as a programme for immediate action. The Abbé de St. Pierre was a highly intelligent man, a member of the French Academy and an *habitué* of the Paris salons, who got into trouble with his government because he expounded too clearly the dangers of the centralised despotism which was ultimately to bring about the French Revolution. He acted as Secretary to the plenipotentiary of France at the Congress of Utrecht in 1713, and immediately after the Congress he published a book entitled *Projet de traité pour rendre la paix perpetuelle*, which attracted a great deal of attention at the time and exercised a continuous influence during the following century. Leibniz discussed it in all seriousness, considering the scheme to be in its main outlines at once practicable and desirable;

Voltaire and Rousseau both wrote essays on it; and it undoubtedly had a powerful effect upon the proposals of the European statesmen for the settlement of Europe a hundred years later, after the Napoleonic wars.

St. Pierre's main argument is that in its moral basis the whole of Europe forms essentially a single society, and that the progress which has resulted in the establishment of the Reign of Law, and the banishment of private wars, in individual states, is incomplete until it has been extended to inter-state relations. There *is*, he urges, a real public law of Europe, but it is variable, insecure, and unprogressive just because it has not been made in concert. The only ultimate safeguard for the common civilisation of Europe is that all constituent states should be placed in such a condition of mutual dependence that no one of them shall be in a position to resist the rest, and therefore that no one of them shall be tempted to think that it can derive advantage from overriding or disregarding the common conscience. All this might have been written to-day: it is the essence of a hundred pamphlets which have appeared since the beginning of the Great War. But still more striking is St. Pierre's detailed scheme for giving effect to his ideas, for this is substantially identical with the proposals which are being on all hands recommended to us as a sure panacea for the ills of Europe.

St. Pierre proposed that all the sovereigns of Europe should enter into a perpetual and irrevocable alliance of peace, which should be main-

tained by a permanent congress of ambassadors. This Congress of the European Concert was to settle all differences between states by arbitration. It was to have the power of putting to the ban of Europe any state which refused to accept its decisions, and when this was done, all states were to be bound to take up arms against the offending member. The whole system (and this is, of course, essential) was to rest upon a mutual guarantee by all the contracting states of the territories which they actually possessed at the moment when the alliance was made, and of the permanence of existing treaties.

This League of Peace, supported by common action, replacing war by arbitration, and resting upon the sanctity of treaties, is, let us repeat, almost identical with the projects which the St. Pierres of to-day are urging upon our attention.[1] The Governments of the eighteenth century would have nothing to do with it. But even if they had been willing to adopt it, it must have proved an absolute failure, and this for two main reasons. In the first place, like every such scheme, it depended upon the possibility of maintaining existing treaties inviolate. We are too apt to assume that the sanctity of treaties is axiomatic—too fond of declaring that respect for the sanctity of treaties is the very foundation of international morality. There is a sense, of course, in which this is true; since mutual confidence between states is impossible unless they can be trusted to fulfil their

[1] See, for example, Mr. J. A Hobson's *Towards International Government.*

formal pledges. But it is also true that no treaty has any claim to be regarded as sacred except in so far as it is a just settlement of the question with which it deals. Very few treaties are absolutely just even at the moment when they are made, and still fewer can hope to be permanently just, because changing conditions must in almost every case invalidate them in course of time. The beginning of wisdom in international relations is a recognition of the fact that almost all treaties need revision from time to time, and any scheme of reconstruction which does not provide for this is doomed to failure. If the treaty system of 1713 had been taken as final and unalterable, Germany would have been left chaotically subdivided into 360 states, some of them under the control of foreign governments; Italy would have been left in disunion; Poland would have been left in possession of large territories inhabited by Russians; the Turk would have been left in control not only of the whole Balkan Peninsula, but of a great part of what is now the Austrian Empire. The united strength of the *respublica Christiana* would have been pledged to compel whole nations to remain under governments which they detested and repudiated. St. Pierre was, in fact, wholly blind to the strength of the national idea, and he cannot be blamed for his blindness, since it was shared by all the world.

Again, as the contracting parties to the treaties of 1713 were not peoples but (for the most part) despotic princes whose treaty adjustments were neither more nor less than dynastic arrangements, the guarantee of their rights and possessions would

almost necessarily have involved a guarantee also of their systems of government. St. Pierre was half-conscious of this. Knowing that very many modern wars had nominally arisen out of succession disputes, he felt it necessary that the treaty of permanent peace should guarantee the sovereignty and the order of succession as fixed in each state at the time of the treaty. But this was equivalent to guaranteeing princes against their subjects, and must in the long run have made the unity of Europe hateful to all its peoples by making it appear responsible for the evils they desired to remove. St. Pierre's scheme, therefore, could not have been successful even if Europe had been ready to try it, and would have formed an obstacle to progress if it had been put into operation. Nevertheless his book, and the long discussion which followed it, marked a real step forward. The need for some means of expressing the common civilisation of Europe was more widely recognised ; the problem of finding some kind of international organisation had become a more practical problem, canvassed by the politicians (though not yet very seriously), and discussed on the basis of definite proposals by the ablest political thinkers during a period of very acute and searching political thought.

An almost unbroken succession of wars followed this Utopian project, culminating in the desperate paroxysm of the French Revolutionary wars and the conquests of Napoleon. Almost at the beginning of this vast upheaval, in 1795, the greatest of European philosophers put forth a new plea for the organisation of Europe, and the prevention of war.

It is not necessary to discuss here Kant's *Zum ewigen Frieden* (Towards Lasting Peace), because it exercised little or no direct influence upon the course of events. But its publication is a proof of the preoccupation of the best minds of Europe with the greatest political problem which still remains unsolved. It is still more significant to find that Napoleon himself seems to have given some thought to this problem. Las Cases, in his record of the exiled Emperor's conversation at St. Helena, tells us that Napoleon asserted that the object of his wars was to sweep away the irrational political structure which cumbered the ground in eighteenth-century Europe, and to substitute for it a rational division of states on national lines. When that was done, he had intended to combine all the nation-states into a great federation under the leadership of France, with a central assembly to deal with general concerns and maintain peace. Though this great scheme had been ruined by his fall, he foretold that it would one day be realised. "The impulse has been given, and I do not think that after my downfall and the disappearance of my system, any equilibrium will be possible in Europe other than the consolidation and confederation of the great peoples. The first sovereign who adopts in good faith the cause of nationalities will find himself at the head of all Europe, and will be able to accomplish whatever he wishes."

Napoleon's retrospects and reflections at St. Helena, especially as recorded by Las Cases, are not to be trusted as historical statements of fact; their object was to create a Napoleonic legend, and

to justify the great conqueror in the eyes of posterity. There is no reason to suppose that any such idea was really entertained by Napoleon in the days of his greatness; though, as we have already seen, he knew how to appeal to the spirit of nationality in Poland and in Italy. But it is at least significant that the most powerful political brain of modern times should have felt that the best way to secure the favourable judgment of posterity was to identify his name with the twin causes of nationalism and internationalism; and that he, first among modern statesmen, should have seen that these two ideas are in no way inconsistent with one another, but that an effective internationalism can only be rendered possible by a triumphant nationalism.

It may appear to the reader that there is little profit in tracing this record of abortive Utopian schemes, and that the only moral which can legitimately be drawn from such a story is that all such schemes are doomed to failure. But that conclusion is not legitimate. What we should rather recognise is, first the persistence of the demand for some sort of supra-national organisation; and secondly the steadily increasing practicality of these projects, the growing recognition which they show of the real nature of the problem. With Sully we escape from the old dream of the world-state, and are introduced to the idea of an inter-state organisation; with St. Pierre we realise that the possibility of any such organisation must depend upon the possibility of a reasonable and just settlement of Europe, that it must be something in the

nature of a standing alliance, and that it must be conceived in the interest of all the constituent states ; with Napoleon we attain the idea that the principle of nationality affords the only basis for a just and permanent settlement of Europe. Here is real progress. The mind of Europe is gradually working out a great conception, and when Napoleon fell it was ready to attempt the first premature realisation of this conception.

Meanwhile, along another line of development, still more marked progress had been made. The main principles of International Law had been not only worked out, but had been in practice accepted by all civilised states. We have seen that with the breakdown of the universal supremacy of the Papacy Europe had lost the sole arbiter who had hitherto been able in some degree to enforce the Rule of Right upon rival states and princes. Did that mean that there was no longer any restraint of law upon the relations of states, that all things were permissible to them ? Europe never for a moment admitted such a doctrine, for the civilised world has never in fact tolerated the modern German view that law derives its sole validity from the Power that enforces it. The horrors of sixteenth and seventeenth century warfare, however, and the faithlessness and brutality which often marked the relations of states during those centuries, and especially during the hideous Thirty Years' War, awakened men to the need of having some clear and accepted exposition of the restrictions by which states should be bound in their mutual relations. Two or three partial attempts in this

direction were made in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, but the work of the Dutch scholar and jurist Grotius *De Jure Belli et Pacis*, published in Paris in 1625 in the midst of the horrors of the Thirty Years' War, marked so immense an advance on anything that had been previously done, and attained so quickly an authoritative position, that it has been justly claimed that modern International Law sprang fully-developed from the brain of Grotius. He had a long succession of followers during the seventecnth and eighteenth centuries, and it is remarkable that all the most respected writers on this new subject came from those little states which were most conscious of the need for the protection of a system of international law; Puffendorf, Leibniz, and Wolff sprang from the little divided principalities of Germany; Bynkershoek, like Grotius, from Holland; Vattel (whose *Droit des Gens*, published in 1758, became the most generally popular exposition of the subject) from Switzerland. International Law is the gift of the little states to Europe. That is one of the reasons why the German Treitschke declines to recognise its validity.

Now it would appear at first sight that a body of doctrine in regard to international relations which was worked out by a succession of scholars who possessed no legislative authority can scarcely possess the character of "law" at all. Yet the simple fact is that, from the time of Grotius downwards, all civilised states have recognised the validity of this body of law, and have enforced it in their courts exactly as if it had been enacted by

their own supreme legislative bodies. A large part of the literature of the subject consists, indeed, of the judgments of great lawyers, like Lord Stowell in England, given in the course of the trial of cases wherein the provisions of this book-made law were accepted as decisive. Nay, more ; the Congresses of the European powers have time and again assumed its validity for all the European peoples. In 1648, when the close of the Thirty Years' War brought together the first Congresses in which almost all the European states were concerned, the diplomats of Westphalia spoke of "the principles of the law of nations" as of something that had an unquestioned reality, and hoped that their own determinations would form part of "the public law of Europe" with the tacit assumption that Europe did unquestionably possess a "public law" distinct from the "municipal law" of its component states ; and similar references based upon the same assumptions are to be found in several of the later general treaties. A single elementary illustration may serve to show how universal is the acceptance by all civilised states of the broad principles of International Law. It is universally assumed that the territorial sovereignty of every maritime state ends three or four miles from the high-water mark along its shores, and that beyond this line the seas are equally open to all nations. This principle is universally recognised in the courts of all nations, as well as by their governments. But where did this principle come from ? Who imposed it upon the Courts ? Solely the treatises on international law.

But whence did the authors of this remarkable system derive their doctrines ? They cannot have manufactured them out of their own heads, or they would not have been so readily accepted. We can, in fact, trace the doctrines of Grotius and his successors to three main sources, which they have codified, clarified, and reduced to a system.

The chief inspiration of Grotius himself was the *jus gentium* or *jus naturæ* which he borrowed directly from the Roman jurists. In the Institutes of Justinian, which expounded the final codification of the slowly growing body of Roman Law, stands this striking statement. " All peoples who are ruled by laws and customs are governed partly by their own particular laws, and partly by those laws which are common to all mankind. The law which a people enacts is called the Civil Law of that people, but that which natural reason appoints for all mankind is called the Law of Nations, because all mankind uses it." Now this " law of nations " which the Roman lawyers had worked out had been created in the first instance by the practical necessity of finding a common set of rules for the many different tribes whom Rome had conquered. But the idea had been enlarged by being merged with the philosophical idea of the Law of Nature, or body of fundamental moral conceptions which Nature was supposed to prescribe ; the two really distinct ideas of the " Law of Nations," or greatest common measure of various tribal customs, and the " Law of Nature," or moral rule of the universe, were blended and confused, and in this form were handed down to the Middle Ages, which very readily

accepted the conception. Obviously the Law of Nations as conceived by the Roman or mediæval jurist was something quite different from what we mean by International Law : it was a body of law that was obligatory upon all individuals, not a body of law regulating the relations of sovereign states with one another. But the universal acceptance of the binding character of this Law of Nations, and the suggestion of internationality conveyed by its name, made it easy for Grotius to apply it to the new purpose. Perhaps his most essential contribution to the foundation of the new science was the assumption that the sovereign states of Europe, not being under the authority of any legal tribunals, were in a " state of nature " in relation to one another, and therefore subject to the " law of nature " ; and that therefore the developed body of the Roman law of nature or of nations was applicable to them. If two men of different *gentes* or nations appeared before a Roman Praetor, he regarded them as being in a " state of nature " because they were not subject to the same body of civil law, and he therefore applied the " Law of Nations " in determining the dispute between them. Now one of the principles laid down for the guidance of the Roman judge in such cases was that in the " state of nature " all men are equal ; which simply meant that the special rights or privileges of class or caste which might be recognised by the civil law of any state could not in their case apply. Grotius adopted this doctrine, and laid it down that as states are in the " state of nature " in regard to one another, they must be treated as equals, and no

special privileges must be recognised in International Law as belonging to any particular state merely because it is stronger than its neighbours, or because it has been in the habit of assuming certain rights (let us say) beyond the three-mile limit. The doctrine of the equality of states became one of the central ideas of international law. But much of the detail, and not merely the general principles, of Grotius' treatise is simply transferred from the body of the Roman law of nations, and adapted to the needs of inter-state relations, which the Romans had never contemplated. And because this Roman system was known (at all events by name) to all the governing classes of Europe, and its validity was universally accepted, it was easy for the new body of doctrine to get itself recognised. It was not a new set of laws, coined out of a pedant's brain, that Europe was brought to accept; but the adaptation to new circumstances of a body of principles long recognised.

A second source of International Law was the body of customs which had grown up during centuries. Some of these were in part the product of the feudal age and the usages of chivalry, such as the rules regarding the treatment of heralds, ambassadors, and prisoners of war. Others had arisen from the needs of commerce; the merchants of the Italian or the Hanseatic towns, and (more recently) the trading adventurers of England and Holland, had acquired customary rights of protection in the countries with which they traded, or had worked out for their own convenience rules

governing their mutual relations when they were at a great distance from their home authorities. These usages were capable of codification and unification. So far as concerned maritime law, this was done first by the Dutchman Bynkershoek.

Lastly, the innumerable treaties between various states implied or embodied many principles which were capable of being expressed in a legal form, and this was done by the philosopher Leibniz in his *Codex juris gentium diplomaticus*.

Now all these sources of the new body of law were of recognised authority and validity; and for that reason it was possible for Europe to acquire, as a result of the remarkable work of these two centuries, a system of international law which had been drawn up by no legislative body, but which was nevertheless recognised as valid by every government claiming to be civilised, and actually enforced by the courts of every state. The drawback of this system was that it was not easily capable of expansion or modification or improvement, just because it was not the result of enactments. It was also open to disputes and various interpretations which sometimes themselves led to war. Thus the questions of the right of search at sea, the right of blockade, and the definition of contraband were constant subjects of controversy between Britain and other maritime powers. But the fact that states differed as to the interpretation of international law, and that, in the absence of any final court of appeal, these differences might lead to war, does not mean that international law had no validity. You do not dispute about the meaning

of laws if you deny their existence or their binding force.

A third way in which, during the modern period, the unity of Europe obtained some expression was by means of Congresses of the powers for the settlement of questions at issue between them. These Congresses have been peculiar to the modern age. Nothing like them existed in the Middle Ages, or in the ancient world. They were the outcome of the far-reaching wars of the modern age in which time and again all the leading states were involved. They limited themselves in effect to defining the results of these wars. But on all the more important occasions, as in 1648, in 1713, and repeatedly during the eighteenth century, they included representatives of so many states that they may almost be described as European diets or parliaments. Nor did they strictly confine themselves to the mere territorial adjustments brought about by war. They dealt with many wider questions of general interest, as when in 1648 the constitution of Germany was reconstructed, and the principles upon which the religious persuasions of its people should be governed were laid down. They were naturally concerned not merely with the establishment of peace, but with its maintenance ; and in the frequent, lengthy, and dreary deliberations of the Congresses of the early eighteenth century we can trace the germ of the future Concert of Europe.

Thus it is not true to say that there was no progress in the development of a common organisation for Europe, even in the period before the

French revolution. Governments had acquired the habit of holding frequent consultations over questions affecting common interests ; and if they had not yet succeeded in maintaining peace for even a single consecutive period of ten years during three centuries, at least they were increasingly desirous of doing so, and more than once expressed the pious hope that their latest territorial adjustment might lead to permanent peace by being accepted as "part of the public law of Europe." The work of Grotius and his successors had in a quite remarkable way endowed Europe with an accepted body of international law ; and if its range was insufficient, its validity was unquestioned, and it was on the whole tolerably well observed. These things, indeed, were not enough. The consultations of Congresses *after* great wars were insufficient for the maintenance of peace, and some permanent organisation seemed to be necessary ; the expansion of the body of International Law could not be satisfactory until its provisions could be amended or added to by some recognised authority. But this need also was felt ; and, as we have seen, there was a succession of schemes for the creation of a central European authority, all of which came to nothing, but each of which marked an advance upon its predecessor in its realisation of the essential elements of the problem. Europe was ready to welcome the serious attempt at confederation with which the Nineteenth Century opened.

III

THE ATTEMPT TO FEDERATE EUROPE, 1815–1825

The first responsible statesman of Europe to propose the creation of something that could be called an organisation for the permanent maintenance of European peace was the Tsar Alexander I of Russia. A sentimentalist and a dreamer, an egoist and an altruist at once, a despot who had accepted a varnish of French democratic doctrines while at the same time believing with all the strength of his sincerely religious nature in his own divine right to rule, Alexander is at once the most interesting and the most disappointing figure among the leading statesmen of Europe at the opening of the nineteenth century. Feared at first by all reactionaries as the "crowned Jacobin," he came to be identified with the worst absurdities of reaction; and the Holy Alliance which he conceived as a means of bringing peace and goodwill among men came to appear the worst engine of oppression from which Europe had ever suffered. Yet there is no doubt at all that Alexander honestly desired peace and ensued it. The governing motive of his action in European affairs was the determination to do what he could for the organisation of European peace. At the outset he seems to have grasped, though not very firmly, the truth which was hidden from all his contemporaries except possibly Napoleon, that the reorganisation of Europe upon national

lines formed the only possible basis for a permanent system. He was neither strong enough nor clear-headed enough to give effect to this conception, though he did something to forward it both in Poland and in Germany. But the nationalist idea had no deep root in his mind. The conviction that it was his divine mission to give lasting peace to Europe was far stronger; and hence he became in the end the prey of the reactionaries of Metternich's school, whose thesis was that revolution was the greatest danger to peace, and who lumped the enthusiasts for nationality with other revolutionaries. Alexander's work therefore remained incomplete and unsatisfactory. Yet he deserves the credit of having been the motive power of the remarkable attempt to create a federation of Europe which forms the chief interest of the decade 1815–1825.

It was in the year 1804 that Alexander's scheme for the reorganisation of Europe first took shape. Pitt was then engaged in the formation of the Third Coalition against Napoleon; and in the course of the negotiations the Russian ambassador in London received from the Tsar a long memorandum on the settlement of Europe after the expected defeat of Napoleon, which he was instructed to lay before Pitt. He urged that the great aim must be permanent pacification; and supported his contention by an argument so striking that it deserves quotation.[1] "This great aim," he says, "cannot be looked upon as attained until, on the

[1] I quote from Mr. Alison Phillips' *Confederation of Europe*, p. 34.

one hand, the nations have been attached to their governments, by making these incapable of acting save in the greatest interest of the peoples subject to them, and, on the other, the relations of states to each other have been fixed on more precise rules, and such as it is to their mutual interest to respect. The conclusions of profound thinkers[1] and the experience of centuries sufficiently prove that these two results cannot be attained save when internal order shall have been founded on a wise liberty . . . and when at the same time the law of nations, which regulates the relations of the European Confederation, shall have been re-established on true principles. . . . Why could one not submit to it (a Congress) the positive rights of nations, assure the privilege of neutrality, insert the obligation of never beginning war until all the resources which mediation of a third party could offer have been exhausted, until the grievances have been by this means brought to light, and an effort to remove them has been made ? On principles such as these one could proceed to a general pacification, and give birth to a League, of which the stipulations would form, so to speak, a new code of the law of nations, which, sanctioned by the greater part of the nations of Europe, would without difficulty become the immutable rule of the cabinets while those who should try to infringe it would risk bringing upon themselves the forces of the new union."

[1] Probably an allusion to Rousseau's essay on St. Pierre's *Projet*, which he seems to have read, and possibly to Kant's *Zum ewigen Frieden*.

This fine utterance strikes a note not hitherto heard in European diplomacy, and ought to have been of good augury for the opening century. It was made still more impressive by the Tsar's insistence, in another part of his memorandum, upon the importance of considering national affinities in any territorial rearrangement of Europe, and by the real feeling with which he urged that the new alliance should, if opportunity offered, put an end to the Turkish Empire, or at the least secure better conditions of life for the unhappy Christian peoples in the Balkan peninsula.

The reply of Pitt to this magnanimous document was perhaps needlessly cautious. No doubt he distrusted the vague revolutionary theories which might seem to lie behind the Tsar's words. He defined the aims of the alliance as being in the first place to reconquer the recent territorial acquisitions of France, secondly to create out of these territories a barrier against future French aggression, and in the third place to establish a guarantee for the mutual protection of the Powers, and a general system of public law. But in reply to the Tsar's doctrine of nationality he responded with the dreary principle of the restoration of ancient rights. As to the maintenance of permanent peace, his panacea was that "a treaty should be concluded in which all the principal European Powers should take part, by which their possessions and respective rights, as then established, should be fixed and recognised; and these Powers should all engage reciprocally to protect and support each other against all attempts to disturb it. This

treaty would give to Europe a general system of public law." In other words, Pitt pinned his faith to the sanctity of treaties ; and he appears to have had no more generous conception of international law than the mere maintenance of treaty rights.

In the end, however, the Treaty of 1805 between Britain and Russia contained the promise of co-operation on a scale never hitherto known in European history. "Their Majesties, who take the most lively interest in the discussion and precise definition of the law of nations and in the guarantee of its observance by general consent and by the establishment in Europe of a federative system, to insure the independence of the weaker states, by erecting a formidable barrier against the more powerful, will come to an amicable understanding among themselves as to whatever may concern these objects. . . ."

The Third Coalition, which resulted from these negotiations, failed like its predecessors ; and nine more years passed before the plan of European reconstruction could be put into operation. In one way the delay was an advantage : so many of the old landmarks had been swept aside during these years that the possibility of a very sweeping re-arrangement lay before the statesmen of 1814 and 1815, if they had not been hampered partly by their divergent ambitions and their mutual jealousies, and partly by the bargains which they had made during the course of the war.

The whole world in 1814, utterly weary of war, longed for a permanent peace, and expected to see it secured as a result of the Congress of Vienna.

"Men promised themselves," wrote von Gentz, secretary of the Congress, "an all-embracing reform of the political system of Europe, securities for peace, in short, the return of the Golden Age": it is what men are promising themselves to-day. These hopes were in some degree shared by the diplomats themselves; they were shared in the fullest measure by the Tsar Alexander, who looked forward to the new age with a solemn and religious emotion. It was under the influence of this emotion that, three months after the Congress of Vienna had completed its deliberations, he invited the adhesion of his fellow sovereigns to that extraordinary compact known as the Holy Alliance, whereby they were made to declare "their fixed resolution, both in the administration of their respective states, and in their political relations with every other government, to take for their sole guide the precepts of the Holy Religion of our Saviour, namely, the precepts of Justice, Christian Charity, and Peace; . . . looking on themselves as merely delegated by Providence to govern branches of the one family, . . . thus confessing that the Christian world, of which they and their peoples form a part, has in reality no other Sovereign than Him to whom alone power really belongs."

This was indeed a full recognition of that *respublica Christiana* of which St. Pierre wrote. When St. Pierre was putting forward his scheme Cardinal Fleury had told him that he would need very persuasive missionaries to touch the hearts of princes and convert them to his views. Here was the Tsar of all the Russias volunteering for the office.

The Holy Alliance seemed to Castlereagh and Metternich "a piece of sublime mysticism and nonsense," and it exercised no direct influence. But none the less, they, equally with Alexander, believed in the possibility of permanent peace supported by a sort of federation of Europe; and they and their colleagues did their best to secure it. In the first place they carried out a most elaborate treaty settlement of every part of Europe except the Turkish Empire. This treaty settlement they hoped to maintain permanently inviolate, and in order to secure that it should be so, they obtained a formal acceptance of it from every ruling state. In the second place, they resolved to maintain in existence the alliance of Great Powers which had been originally formed to overthrow Napoleon. It was now to be a guarantee of peace; and the possibility of war was to be avoided, and the common affairs of confederated Europe regulated, at a series of Congresses to be held from time to time.[1] This was a new thing in European history. There had been many Congresses to settle the results of wars before 1815; but the series held during the next decade were the first that had ever been summoned in time of peace, and for the purpose of guarding against the outbreak of war. At the first of the Congresses, that of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818, errant France was readmitted to the fellowship of Europe and joined the League of Peace. The occasion was taken to issue a Declaration of a very remarkable character.

"The Convention of the 9th October, 1818," it

[1] Art. VII of the Quadruple Alliance. Nov. 20, 1815.

runs, . . . "is considered by the Sovereigns who concurred therein, as the accomplishment of the work of Peace, and as the completion of the political system destined to ensure its solidity. The intimate Union established among the Monarchs who are joint parties to this System . . . offers to Europe the most sacred pledge of its future tranquillity. The object of this Union is as simple as it is great and salutary. It does not tend to any new political combination—to any change in the Relations sanctioned by existing Treaties. Calm and consistent in its proceedings, it has no other object than the maintenance of Peace, and the guarantee of those transactions in which the Peace was founded and consolidated. The Sovereigns, in forming this August Union, have regarded as its fundamental basis their invariable resolution never to depart, either among themselves, or in their Relations with other States, from the strictest observation of the principles of the Law of Nations; principles which, in their application to a *state of permanent Peace*, can alone effectually guarantee the independence of each government, and the stability of the general association."

Here indeed the Confederation of Europe seemed to be definitely established; the unity of the *respublica Christiana* to be at last secured. This 'project of perpetual peace' fulfilled the dreams of St. Pierre, and it gave to the system of International Law the most august authorisation. If the passages quoted above were reissued to-morrow as a statement of principle, the most enthusiastic pacifists would be satisfied.

Yet the great endeavour was a complete failure. At the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle itself a cleavage had already begun to appear among the Powers ; and the form and phrasing of their alliance was only agreed to after many difficulties had been raised by Castlereagh, the British representative, who feared, not without reason, that the members of the "august Union" of sovereigns would be tempted to use their irresistible power to interfere in the internal affairs of individual states. The next two years showed what just grounds there were for these fears. By 1820 the Holy Alliance (as the League of Peace was popularly but inaccurately called) had come to be regarded throughout Europe as an engine of tyranny and an obstacle to progress. By 1825 the "august Union" had been broken up by the withdrawal of Britain, soon to be followed by France ; and no act of a British statesman has ever been more cordially approved than Canning's defiance of the "league of sovereigns that aspire to bind Europe in chains." By 1830 Belgium, revolting against Holland, had treated as a scrap of paper one important clause in the inviolable treaty settlement, and was supported in doing so by Britain and France.

It is true that for about thirty years after 1815 an uneasy peace, disturbed by revolutionary outbreaks, was maintained in Europe ; and this was a longer interval of peace than Europe had ever yet enjoyed since Charles VIII burst over the Alps in 1494. The League of Peace may reasonably claim much of the credit for this, though the general exhaustion which followed the long French wars

contributed even more effectively. But in 1848 red revolution broke out in France, Germany, Austria, and Italy; and though it was crushed in all these countries, it was followed by a long series of great wars which changed the face of Europe: the Crimean War, the wars of Italian liberation, the wars of Prussia against Denmark, Austria, and France, the war of Russia against Turkey. And when in 1878, after another Congress, Europe settled down to a longer interval of unrestful peace, where were the treaty provisions of 1814 and 1815, that were to have been sacred and inviolable, maintaining under the guarantee of all the Powers the permanent peace of Europe? Scarcely anything remained of the four hundred pages of carefully elaborated provisions. What is more, everybody realised, and everybody now recognises, that the breakdown of the arrangements of 1815 was necessary and advantageous. The first great practical experiment in the organisation of the *respublica Christiana* had disastrously failed.

This failure forms so great a tragedy in the history of the international idea that its causes deserve analysis, the more so as the failure is often supposed to prove the impracticability of any standing international organisation for the maintenance of peace. Such is the view taken by the latest historian of the experiment, Mr. Alison Phillips. But before we accept a conclusion so disheartening, it is surely incumbent upon us to satisfy ourselves that the causes of failure were not temporary, or peculiar to the circumstances of 1815.

The first and most obvious ground for the failure

was that the terms of the treaty settlement upon which the experiment was based were in themselves unsatisfactory. They were especially unsatisfactory in that they failed to recognise the national aspirations which were already vocal in Germany, and which were to become very powerful forces in other European countries during the next generation. Yet it would be unreasonable to blame the statesmen of 1815 for this. As we have already seen, the national principle as such had not yet been clearly enunciated; and even if the men of 1815 had resolved to act in accordance with a doctrine which was not yet fully formulated, and which so far as it had been formulated was regarded as one of the vague generalisations characteristic of a revolutionary age, they would have found it difficult or impossible to draw clear lines of national division. In any case, they were fallible men, and their hands were tied by bargains which it had been necessary to make during the course of the war: for example, the promise that Norway should be annexed to Sweden, which had brought into the field the armies of Bernadotte. They were furthermore preoccupied by the necessity, which naturally seemed paramount, of guarding against future French aggression. And finally, though they honestly desired to deal fairly by Europe as a whole, each of them naturally placed first the interests of his own state. But these are conditions which are likely to repeat themselves in any general European adjustment. The only point in which our own generation may be said to have an advantage over the men of 1815 is that to us the meaning and bearings of the

national principle have become clearer. But just as the strength of the national sentiment was hidden from them, so there may be other factors, equally disturbing, which will be hidden from the makers of any future treaty.

The second fundamental defect of the experiment of 1815 is therefore that it was made to depend upon the possibility of maintaining inviolate a treaty settlement arrived at under such conditions. No treaty system made by fallible men amid the heats and rancours of a great war can possibly be ideally just, or free from the seeds of future disturbance ; and any scheme for the organisation of permanent peace which does not recognise this is doomed to fail. The organisation of permanent peace must include some machinery for the revision of treaties, and the necessity of this was never contemplated in 1815. Is this an insuperable difficulty ? Time and experiment alone can show.

The third defect of the system of 1815 was that its makers had forgotten the wise words of Alexander in 1804, when he said that permanent peace would be impossible until " the nations have been attached to their governments by making these incapable of acting save in the greatest interest of the people subject to them." No doubt Alexander had had this in view when he drew up the lofty but vague promises of the Holy Alliance. But his words of 1804 demanded for their fulfilment more than a vague undertaking on the part of sovereigns to observe the principles of religion—as interpreted by themselves. The government of Europe by the " august Union " was in fact a failure mainly for

this very reason, that the governments which participated in it were *not* "incapable of acting save in the interests of their peoples," and therefore were not secure of the loyalty of their subjects. For that reason they came to regard their Union as a means of preserving their threatened authority within their own dominions, or the authority of lesser princes in other lands; and the League of Peace became in essence a league of despots for combined resistance against the claims of their subjects. This, more than anything else, undermined and weakened it, earned for it the hatred of Europe, and discredited for a very long period even the idea of the international co-operation of governments. But is it not possible to conceive a League of Peoples taking the place of a League of Sovereigns?

The fourth defect of the system was a corollary of that which has just been described: the leading members of the League of Peace persuaded themselves that the maintenance of peace not merely justified but necessitated their intervention in the internal affairs of individual states, to crush out revolutionary movements which, as they feared, were liable to lead to the same results as the French disturbances of 1789. It was, in fact, on this issue that the League actually broke up; for Britain from the outset refused to admit the validity of such interventions, and in the end Canning broke away from the League in protest against intervention in Spain, and by recognising the independence of the revolting American colonies of Spain, "called in a new world to redress the balance of

the old." Now it must be admitted, in fairness to the "august Union of Sovereigns," that the history of the French revolution did seem to provide some justification for their attitude; although it may fairly be argued that the French Revolution would have remained a purely domestic movement if the sovereigns of Europe had not meddled with it in 1792. But are we to assume, as Mr. Phillips seems inclined to do, that such interventions were the inevitable and necessary result of co-operative action? The conclusion seems to be illegitimate; and while we may admit that it was natural for the sovereigns of 1820 to meddle in the internal affairs of Spain, Naples, or Germany, the unhappy results of their actions are likely to form a useful lesson for any future League of Peace, should such ever be formed.

In short, the failure of the great attempt of 1815 cannot fairly be regarded as proving the bankruptcy of the international idea. On the contrary, it may rather be said to have contributed to a clearer understanding of the international problem, whose conditions, hitherto discussed only by theorists, had now been made the subject of experiment. The failure of 1815 seemed to make it clear that the regulation of common European affairs cannot be successfully attempted unless the following conditions are fulfilled: (1) the adjustment of Europe on which it is based must be such as to give reasonable satisfaction to the aspirations of peoples, and not merely to the rival claims of dynasties; (2) the dogma of the sanctity of treaties must not be adopted as its foundation, but some means must

be found whereby the inevitable defects of any treaty settlement shall be open to revision ; (3) the League must essentially be a league of peoples and not of sovereigns ; and (4) the League must, however great the temptation, abstain from intervention in the internal affairs of its constituent members. Are these conditions realisable ? Only time can tell. But they do not seem beyond the bounds of possibility ; and in so far as the experiment of 1815 served to make clearer the nature of these conditions, it may fairly be said that it contributed to the development of the international idea.

IV

THE PROGRESS OF INTERNATIONALISM, 1815–1914

Although the attempt of 1815 to establish a Confederation of Europe failed, it is a mistake to assume, as is often done, that no permanent advantage resulted from it, and that the international movement made no progress during the nineteenth century. On the contrary, there were three achievements of 1815 which were of lasting value, and which formed the beginning of very interesting developments during the next age. In the first place, international law received in 1815 a more formal endorsement than it had hitherto obtained ; some additions were made to its scope ; and during the following century it was materially strengthened and extended. In the second place, the neutralisation of Switzerland in 1815 represented an entirely

new invention for the protection of weak states, and this invention was approved and more than once employed in the next period. In the third place, although the constant co-operation of the Powers, attemptcd in 1815, did not succeed, yet the idea of the Concert of Europe survived, and was frequently used during the following century. It is worth while to trace in outline the fortunes of these three contributions to the idea of internationalism.

The principles of international law (or as the diplomats still preferred to call it, the Law of Nations)[1] were repeatedly endorsed in general terms by the statesmen of 1815, but they made no attempt to draw up "a new code of the law of nations" such as Alexander I had suggested in 1804. They left it, what it had been since its first exposition by Grotius, a body of rules and usages generally observed by the nations, and enforced by their courts, but nowhere quite authoritatively defined, and therefore open to dispute and to varying interpretations. They thus lost a great opportunity not only of placing the system on a sound basis, but of extending its scope. For there were many spheres in which international rules would have been advantageous, and might have been readily accepted in 1815, but which could only be dealt with by common agrcement; such as the conditions under which a citizen of one state should be admitted to citizenship of another, the restrictions that ought to be imposed upon shipping for the safcty

[1] The word "international" was first used by Bentham at the end of the eighteenth century.

of passengers and crew, or the rules for the extradition of criminals. Nevertheless, some additions were made in 1815 to the scope of international law. Thus there was an elaborate definition of the rights of navigation on rivers which pass through more than one country.[1] More significant, there was a general declaration against the slave trade, first issued in 1815 on the proposal of Britain, and renewed in stronger terms at the Congress of Verona in 1822; and though these declarations did not amount to a formal prohibition, they were interpreted by the Conference of Berlin in 1885 as having made the slave-trade illegal "in conformity with the principles of international law as recognised by the signatory powers."

These provisions are important because they were the first formal additions to the body of international law by an authoritative body legislating in the name of Europe as a whole. But much more material additions of this kind were made during the course of the next century; and, in the second half of the century what may be called "legislative congresses" became quite frequent. The first of these additions was the Declaration of Paris, 1856, which prohibited privateering and defined naval blockade. It was made by the Congress which was summoned to conclude the peace after the Crimean war, and it was subsequently communicated to the governments of all organised states, and formally accepted by nearly all. It is a striking proof of the authority attaching to such decisions that Spain and the United States, the chief Powers which did

[1] Final Act of the Congress of Vienna, Arts. 108–117.

not accept the Declaration, both observed it strictly during the Spanish American War. But more striking was the work of the Conference of Geneva, summoned by the Swiss government in 1864 and again in 1868 for the express purpose of defining the international law relating to the treatment of the wounded and their attendants. No 'municipal' law has ever been better observed that the Red Cross Code of Geneva. Again, in 1867, on the invitation of the Russian government, a military conference was held at St. Petersburg, which prohibited the use of explosive or expanding bullets in civilised warfare.

The purely military character of these enactments might indeed suggest to the cynic that war formed the only common interest of the members of the *respublica Christiana*. Yet it was a new thing in European history that the nations should legislate in common at all; and may it not be argued that the stage in the advance towards the Reign of Law thus attained in inter-state relations corresponds to that stage in the development of civil law when the state undertakes to define or regulate the *duellum?* And this common legislation of the nineteenth century was not in fact limited to military questions. It is enough to name the series of postal conferences whereby the nations have agreed to establish uniform rates of postage; or the Conference of Bern in 1887 whereby a uniform literary copyright was instituted for almost the whole of Europe. These may seem small matters; but at least it is true that the range covered by the common legislation of the whole civilised world is

much wider than any one could have anticipated a hundred years ago. The free use of authoritative congresses for the determination of questions of common interest has been characteristic of the nineteenth century, and however modest its immediate results may have been, it has implied a great step towards a real international organisation.

A still greater step was taken—a step which seemed to promise the opening of an altogether new era in the twentieth century—when, on the invitation of the Tsar of Russia, the Hague Conference was summoned for its first session in 1899, and for its second session in 1907. Representative of nearly every civilised state, the Hague Conference was charged in the first instance with the task of trying to bring about a diminution of armaments. It failed in this ; but it took in hand, instead, the task of revising, clarifying, and eodifying the whole body of international law affecting the conduct of war. By doing so, it placed the Law of Nations on an altogether new and stronger footing ; and the truth of this statement is not invalidated by the fact that one state has chosen to disregard these regulations and its own honour.

But the first Hague Conference achieved a still more impressive piece of eommon legislation. It set up a tribunal to arbitrate in the disputes of nations, and thus for the first time equipped Europe with an international court of law.

The Hague Tribunal is not, indeed, a regularly constituted court sitting in permanent session ; it is only a panel of internationally approved arbiters, from among whom the Powers concerned may sclect

when occasion arises, and who will conduct their enquiries in a more or less uniform way. At the Hague Conference in 1907 an attempt was made to substitute for this tentative arrangement a regularly organised and permanent court. The attempt failed, largely owing to the fear of the smaller states that the membership of the court would be monopolised by the greater Powers. The Hague Tribunal therefore forms only a sort of jury panel, from which the parties to an arbitration can make a selection. And, of course, appeal to its decision remains optional. The Conference of 1907 tried, indeed, to draw up a list of cases which should always be referred to arbitration, but no agreement could be obtained. Germany and Austria, in particular, voted against every one of the twenty-four issues proposed to be included in the list.

The character of the court, however, and the fact that resort to it is optional, do not destroy the epoch-marking significance of its institution. The private citizen in England still has some negative share in selecting the members of the jury by which he is to be tried. And it is not very long since he had the right of refusing to be tried by jury at all, and of fighting out his case in the old-fashioned way in 'trial by battle.' The obstinate man who insisted on fighting was subjected to a very effective persuasion, by means of starvation and the placing of heavy weights on his stomach. Perhaps the time may come when the *peine forte et dure* of public opinion, backed by the more tangible pressure of commercial blockade and the like, will be equally effective in persuading recalcitrant states to prefer

the option of arbitration to the option of 'trial by battle.'

International law, then, has made real progress in the nineteenth century. In a second field the initiative of the men of 1815 has led to interesting if less far-reaching results. When the Congress of Vienna (endorsing an arrangement made earlier in 1815) decreed the perpetual independence and neutrality of Switzerland, they invented an entirely new method of securing the freedom of small states, and gave a pledge for the respect due to the weak which formed a real advance towards the establishment of the Reign of Law. The neutrality and independence of Switzerland have been strictly respected, both by the Swiss themselves and by all other states, for a hundred years ; the submission of Bourbaki's French army to internment during the Franco-Prussian War forms a striking proof of the strength of the sentiment supporting this arrangement. The model of Switzerland was followed in the case of Belgium in 1831 and 1839. The neutrality of Belgium has at some moments seemed less safe than that of Switzerland. But it remained unimpaired for over eighty years, and the principal French field army in 1870 surrendered rather than infringe it. Finally, Luxembourg also received the gift of neutrality, on the proposal of Prussia, in 1867, and rested secure in this guarantee for nearly fifty years. These arrangements were without any parallel in earlier history. They seemed to be not merely a security for the particular states which enjoyed them, but a pledge that Europe meant to preserve the freedom and independence of

those small states which are unable to protect themselves by arms, but which have made, and can still make, valuable and distinctive contributions to the common life of Europe under the shelter of their own special institutions. The common guardianship of the weak which was proclaimed in these treaties formed a fine expression of the international spirit at its best.

It remains to consider how far the Concert of Europe, initiated in 1815, has succeeded in maintaining the general interests of civilisation (the greatest of which is peace) since the breakdown of the "august union" of the Powers. It has become almost a commonplace to sneer at the inefficacy of the Concert (in the form in which it has hitherto existed) as an engine for the maintenance of peace. But there is one very simple test. The Concert is a system peculiar to the nineteenth century. Has this century been more free from war than its predecessors ? Undoubtedly it has. In the previous centuries of the modern age, from 1494 to 1815, it is impossible to point to even a single decade during which all the European states were at peace. But in the hundred years from 1815 to 1914 there have been two long intervals of peace. Leaving out the Turkish Empire, there was no war between European states from 1815 to 1848—thirty-three years ; while between 1878 and 1912—thirty-four years—there has been no war at all except the brief and trifling Bulgar-Serb War, and the Greek War of 1897. It is true that the intervening period was filled with great wars : the revolutionary wars of 1848–9, the Crimean War, the War of Italian In-

dependence, the Danish War, the Austro-Prussian War, the Franco-German War, the Russo-Turkish War. But these, for the most part, were the direct product of the nationalist movement, a force so potent that no amount of diplomacy, however skilful, could have held it in check ; and on a broad view of these thirty exciting years, the results were in the long run to the advantage of Europe, because they brought about the triumph of the national principle, and swept from the map the irritating and unreal lines of division which had been allowed to survive in 1815. We may even say, of this period, that in the only instance in which diplomacy did successfully intervene—after the Russo-Turkish War in 1878—its success has had the most deplorable results for European peace.

The two long intervals of peace, from 1815 to 1848 and from 1878 to 1914, have been undeniably due in a large degree to the operation of the Concert ; and this in spite of the fact that during both periods the Concert has had to struggle against very grave obstacles. During the first period, or at all events from 1822, when the " august union " broke down, the Concert was handicapped by the division of Europe into two informal but fairly clearly marked groups of Powers, the three reactionary states of the East, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, and the two liberal states of the West, Britain and France. In spite of this division, the Concert was curiously successful in avoiding war, on questions which would almost inevitably have led to war in any earlier period, as on the Belgian question in 1830, or on the Egyptian question in 1840–1. No doubt

this success was due to the fact that no state in this period definitely desired war and deliberately worked to produce it: in face of such a resolve no Concert can hope for permanent success. But, even in the absence of any definite "will to war," some of the questions of this period would in an earlier age have almost inevitably brought war about: the difference is due to the work of the Concert.

Even in the period of Nationalist wars, the Concert was very active, and not wholly unsuccessful. It found a solution to the Schleswig-Holstein question in 1852, which only broke down because Prussia desired war twelve years later. It strove to avoid the Crimean War, in long conferences and interchanges of notes. It very nearly succeeded (to the despair of the Italian patriot Cavour) in averting the breach between Sardinia and Austria in 1859, which led to the establishment of Italian unity. In 1863 Napoleon III urged[1] in vain that a general European Congress should be summoned, to revise the treaty settlement of 1815, in the hope of avoiding the wars which he saw looming ahead; his project failed partly because the definite Will to War had already become the guiding principle of Prussian policy, partly because other governments considered Napoleon's own policy to be the greatest danger to peace. In 1866, again,[2] Britain, France, and Russia strove to obtain the summons of a Congress in the hope of averting the Austro-Prussian

[1] The very interesting correspondence is printed by Hertslet, *Map of Europe by Treaty*, ii., 1575.

[2] See Hertslet, iii., 1655, where the negotiations are fully recorded.

War. The proposal broke down in face of the demand of Austria that the sacredness of the arrangements of 1815 should be assumed at the outset as a fundamental principle.

During the third period, from 1878 to 1914, the Concert has worked under exceptional difficulties. For in this period the European Powers were all simultaneously struck by colony-fever, and were all rushing in competition to seize the unoccupied regions of the earth. It is one of the most remarkable achievements of the Concert that the partition of Africa was carried out quite peacefully by mutual agreement at the Conference of Berlin in 1885. Again, in this period the decadence of the Turkish power after its defeat of 1878, and the rise of the small Balkan nationalities, introduced disturbing factors of the most serious kind, especially as the Balkans were the scene of the acute rivalry of two of the great Powers, Austria and Russia. Yet no serious explosion was permitted in this dangerous powder-magazine except the small and brief outbursts of the Bulgar-Serb war of 1884 and the Greco-Turkish war of 1897, and in each case the Concert succeeded in checking the conflagration promptly, and preventing it from spreading, though only by maintaining in existence a very precarious and uncertain state of things.

But the gravest difficulty which has faced the Concert during the last quarter of a century has been the formal division of Europe into two hostile armed camps : a division more irreconcilable, more permanently organised, and more alarming than Europe has ever known before. This division was

due in the first instance to the establishment of the Triple Alliance, by means of which Germany was able, from 1879 to 1891, to dominate Europe completely; and in the second place to the inevitable reaction which in 1891 brought together in self-defence the excluded Powers, France and Russia. It seemed to destroy all possibility of Concert between the rival groups. Yet this was not so. The members of one of the groups—France and Russia—were quite sincerely desirous of maintaining peace. The members of the other group were quite willing to maintain peace so long as they were able to get their own way without war, and were even willing to make sacrifices to avoid the outbreak of war at a moment not convenient to themselves. Moreover, one of the six great Powers, Britain, long stood aloof from both combinations (1891–1904), and even when she felt herself driven into a special association with the Franco-Russian group, never committed herself to a formal alliance with them. She was therefore able to exercise a mediating influence, even in the last anxious years which immediately preceded the great adventure of the Central Powers. The Concert has still worked; and has on many occasions averted war when without its action war would assuredly have broken out. In 1905, in 1908, in 1911, in 1912, in 1913, the Concert preserved the peace of Europe amid circumstances of the utmost danger. It would have preserved it again in 1914 but that, on that occasion, one Power had made up its mind for war, and devoted all its ingenuity not to discovering a peaceful solution, but to staving it off, to nullifying the earnest endeavours of the rest,

and above all to preventing any meeting of representatives.

What the best statesmen of Europe, the men who cared for European interests and not merely for the aggrandisement of their own states, were aiming at and regarded as being attainable with good-will, has been poignantly expressed in the famous despatch of Sir Edward Grey of July 30, 1914, which cannot be too often quoted, because it expresses the true aim of the Concert of Europe, and the genuine spirit of internationalism. "If the peace of Europe can be preserved . . . my own endeavour will be to promote some arrangement to which Germany could be a party, by which she could be assured that no aggressive or hostile policy would be pursued against her or her allies by France, Russia, or ourselves, jointly or separately. I have desired this and worked for it. . . . The idea has hitherto been too Utopian to form the subject of definite proposals, but if this present crisis . . . be safely passed I am hopeful that the relief and reaction which will follow may make possible some more definite *rapprochement* between the Powers than has been possible hitherto." Had this invitation been accepted: had Germany given her support to any one of the many proposals for the maintenance of peace, or put forward any single proposal of her own: the Concert of Europe would have been established on a new and healthier basis. But this strong and earnest appeal had an even worse reception than the earlier invitations to co-operate in solving the immediate question. It was not, like them, evaded: it was not even

acknowledged. And the Concert of Europe was murdered.

But though the Concert has broken down, let it not be forgotten that—imperfect instrument as it is—it has done good work and given to Europe two intervals of peace longer than she has ever known in her history. The Concert has failed: the neutrality of small protected states has been brutally infringed: the carefully developed provisions of international law have been disregarded. But this does not do away with the fact that these things have all been achieved during the nineteenth century, and that they express the will and conscience of almost the whole of the civilised world.

Thus far we have been dealing with international movements which were in some sense initiated or encouraged by the peacemakers of 1815. But there have been yet other developments still more powerfully tending in the direction of internationalism, which did not come within the purview of the men of Vienna at all. Among these the most fruitful and the most efficient is the growth of international arbitration, the strength and reality of which is seldom realised.

The first instance in which two nations agreed to submit to arbitration a vexed question between them was a boundary dispute between Britain and the United States in 1794. After this a long time passed before the device was again employed, for the period of the great wars was not one in which such methods of discussion were naturally used. But between 1820 and 1840 eight international disputes were settled by arbitration; and the

method being thus established grew steadily in favour. Thirty questions were thus settled between 1840 and 1860; forty-four between 1860 and 1880; no less than ninety between 1880 and 1900, when The Hague Tribunal came into operation. In these cases most of the chief Powers of the world have been engaged, but Britain has resorted to this method far more often than any other state; the United States make a good second; and France comes third.

In a few cases the disputes settled were of an extremely difficult and dangerous nature, such as in an earlier period would almost inevitably have led to war. Such was the famous case of the *Alabama*, in which the United States claimed full compensation from the British government because it had allowed a commerce-raider in the service of the Confederates to start from a British port, this being held to be a breach of the duties imposed upon a neutral by international law. An exact parallel would be provided if a German commerce-raider were to escape from an American port, and Britain were thereupon to claim full compensation from the United States for all the damage inflicted. The case was of a very high importance as a test case in international law, and the submission of it to a judicial decision rather than to the arbitrament of force was a very great triumph for the Reign of Law in international relations. It may reasonably be asserted that no Power but Britain would at that date have accepted such a decision, and that, in accepting it, Britain made a contribution of the highest importance to the growth of the

international spirit. Quite as striking was the case of the fishing fleet in 1904, when the Russian fleet, in a panic, had fired upon a group of British trawlers and inflicted heavy loss of property and life. Such an episode would in an earlier age have almost inevitably led to war. It was amicably settled by arbitration.

The great majority, however, of the questions thus settled during the nineteenth century were very minor questions, unlikely to lead to war, and dangerous only because they tended to produce a sense of irritation and friction between the Powers concerned. But this does not diminish the importance of the growing willingness of nearly all nations to submit their differences to judicial determination. This was a demonstrated fact by 1900, when the Hague Conference set up a regular machinery to deal with all such cases. The institution of the Hague Tribunal was by no means a piece of sentimental Utopianism. It was the supplying of a felt practical need. For one of the difficulties in the way of earlier arbitrations was the difficulty of constituting the arbitral court. Sometimes it was formed of commissioners from each side in the controversy, sometimes by a reference to the sovereign of a disinterested state. But neither of these methods was wholly satisfactory, and the establishment of a permanent and recognised machinery made it certain that the growth of arbitration would be yet steadier in the twentieth century than it had been in the nineteenth.

Every arbitration case down to the end of the nineteenth century had been the result of a special

agreement between the nations concerned. A very marked advance was made when nations began to make general treaties pledging themselves to submit to arbitration every subject of controversy between them for which this mode of settlement was suitable. The first treaty of this type was that between Italy and the Argentine Republic in 1898. These were states between which any serious conflict was in any case improbable. Far more important was the treaty between the two ancient rivals and enemies, France and Britain, in 1904. After a long period of alienation, these two Powers had succeeded in removing several old causes of friction, one of which (the Newfoundland fisheries dispute) was nearly two hundred years old, while others had quite recently brought them to the verge of war. They resolved never to allow such questions to go on rankling in the future, and pledged themselves by treaty to submit to arbitration every dispute not affecting their honour or their fundamental national interests. The example thus set was so much in accord with the general trend of civilised opinion that during the next six years over one hundred treaties of this type were signed. On the eve of the Great War, almost all civilised states were thus pledged to resort to the method of arbitration whenever possible, the most notable exceptions being Germany and Austria.

It is true that in all these treaties questions of 'vital interest' or of 'honour' were reserved—just as, in most European countries, custom still allows questions of 'honour' between individuals to be settled by the duel; and indeed, it must be

obvious that no nation could be expected to submit its dearest interests to the decision of a group of lawyers, however eminent. It is often urged that this reservation robbed the arbitration treaties of all significance, and it is of course obvious that they did not banish the possibility of war. But if they were honestly carried into effect, the arbitration treaties would have removed all those petty causes of friction which, though not in themselves worth fighting about, produce a standing feeling of irritation, and add greatly to the difficulty of finding a peaceful solution for graver questions when they arise. It was unfortunate that the treaties necessarily left to the rival governments the duty of determining which should, and which should not, be regarded as "arbitrable" cases. The Hague Conference of 1907 tried to meet this difficulty by drawing up a list of twenty-four types of disputes which should always be submitted to arbitration, and by attempting to draft a general and uniform arbitration treaty which all nations should be asked to adopt. These proposals were, however, wrecked, especially by the opposition of Germany and Austria, which voted against every one of the twenty-four proposed definitions, while the German representative violently attacked the scheme of a general treaty. As international agreements must be practically unanimous, this opposition was fatal.

The Hague Conference also attempted to do something in regard to these questions of 'honour' or 'vital interest' which are necessarily excluded from the purview of the arbitral court. It suggested that in cases where arbitration could not be

employed, a commission of enquiry should be set up, and that the parties to the controversy, without pledging themselves to be bound by the report of the commission, should agree to abstain from hostilities until it was presented. This would at least have ensured a period for reflection and negotiation which would, in nine cases out of ten, have led to the avoidance of war. But the Conference was able to achieve no more than a vague expression of opinion, in very general terms. In the attempt to give reality to this idea, the lead was taken by the United States, which concluded with Britain and France two remarkable treaties in the autumn of 1914—after the Great War had actually broken out. The treaty with Britain[1] provides that all disputes not capable of being settled by arbitration shall be submitted to a permanent international commission of five members, two of whom are to be nominated by each of the governments, and the fifth by agreement between them. The Commission is to present a report within a year, and both parties agree not to declare war or begin hostilities before the report is submitted.

It is probable that if these treaties had been concluded in time of peace, they would have been very widely imitated by other nations, and the era of the Reign of Law and of settlement by agreement in inter-state relations would have been brought appreciably nearer. It is, indeed, difficult to realise, in the midst of the horrors of war, how great and how solid had been the progress already made. In

[1] Cd. 7714.

the light of the tragedy which has befallen the world, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that there was a fatal unreality in the whole movement; or even that it was actually mischievous because it tended to conceal from men the real and grave peril under which they were living. But to adopt this conclusion, natural as it may seem, is to lose the sense of proportion. The plain truth is that almost the whole civilised world had realised the futility and wastefulness of war, and was eager to find some way of getting rid of it. That it could not do so was due to the fact that in one state, or group of states, this movement was regarded with contempt and dislike. Throughout the course of modern history, the demand of reasonable men for the introduction of the Reign of Law in inter-state relations had always had to struggle against the influences of the Doctrine of Power, and had always had to fight a losing battle. But the international spirit had grown steadily stronger, and in the early years of the twentieth century it had got the upper hand in all but a few states. The apostles of the Doctrine of Power were beginning to be out of date. The time was slipping away when it would be easy for them to put their gospel into practice; in another generation the sentiment of the civilised world, so powerfully manifested in this arbitration movement, might have become too strong to be resisted: it might even have undermined the war-like spirit of the very states which still held the Doctrine of Power as the chief element in their political philosophy. And perhaps, unconsciously, the feeling that this was so may have been one of

the factors which helped to precipitate the Great War.

The epilogue to the story of the movement for arbitration is to be found in the record of the negotiations of July, 1914. On the 26th July, Serbia, faced by intolerable demands from Austria, gave way on every point but two, and offered to refer these two points to the decision of the Hague Tribunal, though they were questions both of vital interest and of honour. No notice was taken of the offer. On the 29th July the Tsar of Russia, in reply to a telegram from the German Emperor, again urged that the Austro-Serbian dispute should be submitted to the Hague Tribunal. Again there was no reply, and the telegram containing this proposal was omitted from the series of telegrams between the Tsar and the Kaiser published in the German White Book. Never before, in all history, has such an offer been made on the eve of a great conflict. Never before, indeed, has the machinery existed that would have made such an offer possible. Formal arbitration, before a recognised European tribunal, would have avoided all the agonies of war, just as they would have been avoided by the acceptance of the mediation of the Concert of Europe. It is a fact of damning significance that both of these methods were refused. But this does not diminish the importance of the fact that the machinery for pacification had been created, and had been brought into effective operation. Perhaps the deepest tragedy of the Great War is just this, that it was forced upon an unwilling world just at the time when the idea of internationalism, after a long and

painful struggle, had obtained for itself the real support of civilised opinion, and was for the first time in all history getting itself embodied in institutions.

Thus far we have discussed only the formal and governmental steps towards the establishment of an international Reign of Law which have marked the nineteenth century. But it would be a very shallow view of the subject which left out of account the more informal movements of ideas which had made all this development possible. For during the nineteenth century that unity of civilisation, of which the whole international movement was merely a consequence, was emphasised and deepened in a remarkable way. Despite the strength of the nationalist idea, and the increased definition which it obtained during this period, the oneness of all European peoples was in every way being made clearer. Rapid and cheap communication made it easy for the peoples of every nation to become acquainted with their neighbours, and at the end of the nineteenth century practically every educated man travelled more widely than any but a few of the richest had done at the beginning of the century. Universal education, and the universal diffusion of a cheap Press, aided this process. All classes had—or could easily obtain—some knowledge of the principal features of each of the European states, and were daily informed of the principal events of current history: not very intelligently informed, perhaps; but it was a new thing that they should be informed at all. The greatest thinkers and imaginative writers of every country became the

common possession of all the rest, and the influence of Ibsen, of Tolstoi, of Maeterlinck, of Anatole France was felt throughout Europe not only by the few, but by the vastly enlarged reading public of the world. Still more marked was this community of possession in the realms of science ; the wonderful advance of the physical sciences during the nineteenth century has been a co-operative labour, in which it is impossible to disentangle the specific contribution of any individual nation, and the European character of scientific discussion had become so marked that every scholar of any eminence had found it indispensable to be, for the purposes of his daily work, tri-lingual, or at the very least bi-lingual. Students passed to and fro freely from the universities of one country to those of another. The knowledge and thought of the civilised world were a common possession to a degree never known since the days of the Roman Empire.

This was the case also, though not quite so markedly, in the realms of political and social thought ; for the political and social problems of all Europe, however varied the forms they might assume, were eventually identical, being all equally the product of that process of industrialisation which, starting in England, had rapidly conquered the whole of Europe. The main political movements of the nineteenth century were in a remarkable degree international in character. This was true even of the nationalist movement, which was, in its earlier struggles, largely directed by cosmopolitan groups of exiles in London and Paris, who worked in harmony, and shared the same dreams

and ideals. The simultaneity of the revolutionary outbreaks of 1848 forms a striking demonstration of the international character both of the nationalist and of the liberal movement, but the earlier risings of 1820 and 1830 were also linked up in a way which justified the contention of the reactionaries that they had to deal with a revolutionary agitation engineered in common for the whole of Europe. In the second half of the century this interchange of ideas, mainly conducted earlier by the middle classes, from among whom the preachers of nationalism and liberalism chiefly sprang, passed also to the artisan classes. There were conferences and common action between the trade unionists and the co-operative societies of all countries; English, French, German, Italian working-men met more and more frequently in congress, and were persuaded that they pursued a common cause, not limited by the bounds of any single state. The famous "International," which strove to give a common direction to the Socialist movement, was founded in London in 1867; and if it has not achieved much of a directly political character, it has emphasised the unity of all Europe among those classes which might be expected to feel it least, owing to the limitations imposed by circumstances upon their knowledge and range of thought.

Europe, then—or rather, the whole civilised world—has become conscious of its unity in a way unparalleled in the earlier centuries of modern history, and to a degree unknown even in the Middle Ages. And this assimilation of ideas has expressed itself in a very remarkable external assimilation. It

has become a commonplace that the chief cities of Europe become more alike every day. Their buildings are alike. Their streets are paved in the same way. Their vehicles—trams, cabs, taxis, lurries—are identical in form. The more prosperous inhabitants, from Archangel to Cadiz, and from Galway to Athens, wear clothes of the same form, dictated by the arbiters of fashion in London and Paris.

But the most important sign and cause of this growing assimilation of the civilised world has been the immense activity of commerce and industry, which have undergone in the last half century an expansion and transformation of a magnitude that could never have been anticipated. No civilised people is now self-sufficient economically; each is dependent on all the rest, and the humblest peasant now daily uses commodities drawn from every region of the globe. The whole world has become a single vast and complex economic unit. Not only do the people of every country buy from and sell to the people of every other, but the industry and commerce of every country is in part financed by the capital of every other. So extraordinarily intertwined and interwoven are the financial concerns of all civilised states, that it has been possible for one school of thought to argue, with great plausibility, that war among these states had become all but impossible, and must, if it broke out, bring universal ruin and bankruptcy. Capital, they say, knows no country and no patriotism, but flows as by a law of nature wheresoever it can be most remuneratively employed; and if international finance, dominated by a comparatively small number of men, seemed

to present a great danger because of the power it wielded, at least it was tending, along with the international labour movement, to bind the modern industrial world into a single whole, within which wars of the old pattern for the aggrandisement of individual states must become more and more impossible.

The events of 1914 and 1915 have shown that these anticipations were mistaken, or at least exaggerated, and that the money-power is by no means so overwhelmingly strong, or so cosmopolitan in character, as many had assumed. But at least it is undeniable that in the realm of industry and commerce, as in the realms of science and literature and politics, the civilised world is one as it never has been before. The movement towards an international organisation, which we have been tracing in this chapter, had been rapid and effective beyond all previous experience ; but it had only limped slowly and haltingly behind the more powerful forces that were steadily making for the unification of the whole civilised world.

Why, then, has it broken down so suddenly and so tragically ? Is it because it was based upon an empty and unpractical idealism ? What has been written above has been written in vain if that facile criticism still has any hold upon the mind of the reader. Is it not rather because there was lodged in the body of this steadily unifying Europe a society penetrated by conceptions and ideals which were wholly out of sympathy with one of the main currents in modern history, and which descended from an earlier stratum in human development ?

And is it not now evident that the devastating struggle in which we are engaged is a sort of violent reaction on the part of the body politic of Europe to purge itself of this obstinate evil? If that view is just, then indeed, in this aspect also, the Great War is the culmination of modern history. But it is necessary to expand the view a little more fully.

V

THE FORCES HOSTILE TO THE INTERNATIONAL IDEA

The forces in the life of Europe that have been most hostile to the international idea, that is, to the peaceful and organised co-operation of the European states, may all be resumed under three heads: the spirit of nationalism, the spirit of commercialism, and the spirit of militarism. All have been at work in every state, in varying degrees and in different forms. But the first two of these three are not necessarily hostile, but only when they assume particular forms; the third is the essential enemy. And the advance made during the nineteenth century by the international idea has been due to the fact that in many or most of the states of Europe nationalism and commercialism have gradually assumed forms not inconsistent with the international idea, while the strength of militarism has steadily declined. If we would understand why the apparent success of the international movement has brought us in the end to the hideous collapse of 1914, we must ask ourselves in what

states, and for what reasons, the national and the commercial ideas have taken a dangerous form, and in what states and for what reasons the doctrines of militarism have maintained or increased their ancient dominance.

The national spirit is hostile to peace when a nation feels itself unjustly divided or subjugated or denied the opportunity for the development of its characteristic modes of life. In such circumstances it inevitably declares war against the *status quo*, and will continue to be a source of unrest until it has obtained unity and freedom. In the exultation of that achievement, as we have seen, one nation after another has been tempted to aim at domination over its neighbours, and has thus continued to be a danger to peace even after its reasonable aspirations have been satisfied. But whether the national spirit takes this unhappy direction or not will depend upon several circumstances. If the condition of the lands neighbouring the newly united nation is such as to invite aggression, nationalism will develop into chauvinism; but in the absence of such temptation, the nation may pass safely through the period of feverish megalomania which is apt to follow a nationalist triumph, and may settle down quietly to enjoy the unity and freedom it has won. Whether it does so or not will depend upon the nature of the political ideals most widely diffused among its citizens, and above all upon the character and traditions of its ruling classes. The national spirit need not be hostile to peace; under favouring circumstances its satisfaction is the greatest safeguard of peace, and

as we have argued above, lasting peace will not be attained in Europe until every reasonable national aspiration has been satisfied. But if a nation is penetrated by the doctrines of militarism, and if the traditions of its ruling class are of a militarist type, then the spirit of nationality will be apt to intensify these ideas, to sanctify them, and therefore to make them doubly dangerous.

The spirit of commercialism has led to many wars, provoked by the desire to gain access to, or control over, particular markets. This motive has been present in many of our own wars ; it has been the predominant motive with us perhaps more often than with any other people, from the time when we fought to overthrow the Spanish monopoly of the tropical west, to the time when we waged two wars with China in order to force open the gates of that vast market. And it is impossible for any Englishman to deny that war may bring great commercial advantages, more especially the kind of war that leads to the opening up of undeveloped areas, or that brings backward peoples into contact with a more advanced civilisation, and causes an increase both in their wants and in their productive power. Whether a war for commercial control over a highly developed country inhabited by a civilised people can bring any commercial advantage to the conqueror is quite another question. Those who accept the old mercantilist theory that a nation thrives commercially on the ruin of its trade rivals, or any subtler form of that theory, will be ready to believe in the benefit of commercial wars ; but few intelligent men hold that opinion to-day, at any rate

in its cruder forms. The world as a whole now believes that the more prosperous all nations are, the more they will be able to buy from one another. The victor in a war for mere commercial supremacy will doubtless acquire some advantage from the prestige of his victory, and some from the favourable conditions for his trade which he will be able to exact from his defeated rival, but this will be insufficient to balance what he will lose by his own expenditure of life and wealth, and by the diminished purchasing power of his rival, who must be impoverished by the sheer waste of war, and whose productive power must be diminished, partly by financial burdens, and partly by the disheartening influence of defeat and subjection. The world of commerce, for these reasons, has learnt to dread war, rather than to rejoice in it; and in most civilised states the commercial influence upon the whole makes for peace, all the more because the consequences of dislocating the delicate and complicated mechanism of modern trade are quite unpredictable. But that is not to say that the old fallacy that a nation profits commercially from the ruin of a rival trading nation may not still survive, and may not even be made, in a modified form, the governing principle of a trade policy, as it so often has been in the past.

When we say that militarism is the worst foe of international concord, we do not mean merely that the upkeep of vast armies is a danger to peace. The upkeep of armies is not militarism, although it is the product of militarism. A nation in which the spirit of militarism is very weak or even non-existent

may be compelled for its own security to keep very great armies on foot, because it is threatened by the militarism of some neighbouring state ; and the danger to peace from the spirit of militarism would in such a case be increased, and not diminished, if the threatened country were to reduce the size of its armies. This ought to be a mere platitude ; but it evidently is not, since there are well-meaning people who assert that militarism is rampant in all the great states equally, because all keep large armies on foot. Militarism is a spirit, a point of view, an attitude of mind ; often not to be found in the practical soldier, but often very pronounced in the weedy citizen, and most of all in the hooligan of the slums. It is the spirit which believes in brute force, rather than justice, as the ultimate arbiter in human affairs ; which believes that Might makes Right, that the real greatness of a nation depends upon its power to overcome its rivals in war, that war is not only inevitable, but is in itself a good and noble thing, and that all talk about the desirability of peace, and the establishment of the Reign of Law between states is only sentimental twaddle, anæmic hypocrisy. It is the spirit which regards mere physical domination over other men, or other nations, as the greatest of earthly goods, the highest proof of superiority ; and which therefore regards the possession of great armies not as a mere necessity for safety but as a proof of national virility, and the means to achieve dominion. This is a very ancient spirit, which has never been absent from the world. It is the spirit against which the whole history of civilisation is one long struggle ; for it is

the sworn foe at once of Law and Liberty. No European people has been wholly exempt from its temptations, or is, perhaps, wholly exempt from them to-day. But in most civilised nations its power has steadily waned, in spite of the growth of armies: nay, in such a country as France, the practice of universal military service has been actually hostile to the militarist temper, because it has formed a poignant reminder of the price that must be paid for its satisfaction.

If these be the forces most hostile to the international idea and to peace, let us consider where in Europe they have been most active.

Among the small states of the north and west they are simply inoperative. Among the little states of the Balkans they have been very actively at work; unsatisfied national ambitions in the case of every state, inadequate commercial outlets in the cases of Serbia, Rumania, and Bulgaria, have been highly disturbing factors. And in Bulgaria—possibly not among the illiterate people, but certainly at the court and among the soldiers—the militarist spirit has been very powerful. Is not King Ferdinand a German, eager to play in the Balkans the part played by Prussia in Germany? And did not General Savoff precipitate the second Balkan War with the cry that Bulgaria must acquire the hegemony of the Balkans?

But the existence of this temper in the small states would be powerless to disturb the peace of Europe, or to retard the progress of internationalism, unless it found an echo in the greater states. Where, among these, has it been at work?

Not in Britain, which has no unsatisfied nationalist ambitions in Europe, no desire for European dominion, and so vast a heritage outside of Europe that she desires no addition to her responsibilities. She is, and has long been, the least militarist of European Powers, the most firmly convinced that her highest national interest is peace. Some German apologists have indeed tried to hold her responsible for the war, asserting that she brought it about through jealousy of Germany's commercial progress ; that in short British commercialism is the source of all these sufferings. But this theory rests upon the doctrine that commercial advantage can be derived from the ruin of a rival, and it assumes that Britain holds this view ; whereas the plain fact is that the commercial policy of Britain—the policy of open markets—has for sixty years been based upon precisely the opposite view. The doctrine of Free Trade may be sound or unsound, but its essence is the belief that the forcible interventions and regulations of the state hamper rather than help trading development, and Britain has steadfastly acted upon this doctrine. Had she desired to strike a blow at German trade, she could have done so by a simpler and less costly method than that of war : by closing to German merchants all the vast markets which she controls and which have been freely thrown open to them. She did not do so, because she believed (rightly or wrongly) that the more prosperous Germany became, the better customer she would be. And Britain has had in recent years no reason to be gravely alarmed by the comparison between the development of German trade and her

own. For although the volume of German trade was increasing, the volume of British trade was increasing rather more rapidly.

Assuredly it is not in France that any one will look for evidence of a warlike spirit. France has borne for more than forty years the wound to her national pride involved in the loss of Alsace-Lorraine, and the spectacle of the brutality with which these lost provinces were treated. But still deeper and more bitter has been her memory of the agonies of her last great war. If she maintained a great army, it was to defend her existence; she knew always that the brunt of a European war must fall first upon her, and this dread was always present to the mind of every one of her citizens. If she longed to regain the lost provinces, she had suffered too much to dream of precipitating a war in order to regain them. She has desired nothing so earnestly as peace, and has been willing to make many sacrifices for it, as in 1904 when she submitted to see her foreign minister dismissed at German dictation, or as in 1911 when she ceded a large area in Africa to secure the peace. She has known always that in the next great war her very existence as a Power would hang in the balance. Next to Britain she has been the steadiest friend of peace, and of international co-operation; a loyal member of the Concert of Europe, a ready supporter of arbitration.

Nor will any one suggest that Italy, burdened by economic distresses and far from successful in her recent colonial adventures, has been a disturbing factor. Her national aspirations are indeed as yet

unfulfilled : there is still an *Italia irredenta*. But the ambition to gain this territory has not been so strong as to prevent her from remaining, until May, 1915, a member of the Triple Alliance along with the Power which held these lands. For some years past Italy has been the brake on the reckless chariot of the Triple Alliance ; and she has been among the most active of all the civilised states in the organisation of arbitration treaties.

What of Russia ? This despotic Power has long been a bugbear to Europe, and especially to Britain. Undoubtedly there have been militarist elements of some potency among her directing classes. But it was her sovereign who endeavoured in vain to persuade the Powers to reduce their armaments, and who summoned the Hague Conferences ; as his predecessor was the inspirer of the great attempt of 1815 to organise permanent peace. All her European wars since the fall of Napoleon have been directed towards one single end : the expulsion of the Turk from Europe, and the freeing of the Balkan peoples. And these wars, though they have created the free Balkan states, have given her practically no increase of European territory. Moreover, for ten years past she has been in the throes of an internal revolution ; and she has not even now recovered from the effects of her last disastrous attempt to extend her power in the Far East. A very cursory reading of modern Russian history, indeed, is sufficient to show that except through her interventions in Balkan affairs, the ambitions of Russia have never tended to disturb the peace of Europe. Two tendencies have alternated in the direction of

her policy: sometimes reforming and westernising influences have got the upper hand, but these periods have always been pacific in foreign policy; at other times the reactionary and militarist influences have resumed sway, but their aim has always been to divert the attention of the people from the problems of political reconstruction and from the dangerous influences of democratic Europe by turning their minds towards the East. Certainly in recent years the attitude of Russia has been persistently pacific: the way in which she submitted to humiliation on the Bosnian question in 1909 is of a piece with the unflagging and strenuous efforts which she made for peace in 1914. She has never been the foe of international co-operation: her sovereigns have been even Utopian in their advocacy of it. And if further proof be needed that her policy has not been directed towards aggressive war, it is enough to note the unreadiness of her preparations even for self-defence, as they have been displayed by the course of the war.

There remain the three linked predatory Powers, Germany, Austria, and Turkey, whom we have already seen as the last surviving foes of the national principle, and who are equally the enemies of the international idea.

Of Turkey it is enough to say that hers is an Empire which has never represented anything but the ascendancy of sheer brute force; an Empire which is, and always has been, an expression exclusively of the spirit of militarism, and has never entertained any other ideal whatsoever but that of dominion over unwilling subjects. In her decrepi-

tude the fundamental vice of all her history shows more clearly than ever; the ideals of civilisation have no meaning for her.

Of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, that congeries of restless, unhappy and discordant races, linked only by subjection to a common master, it may perhaps suffice to quote the lucid summary of Mr. Take Jonescu, the Rumanian statesman, who has watched her proceedings and her recent policy from very near at hand. "Austria is a state essentially different from every other state in the world. She is a fossil in the modern world. She is a state without being a nation. She is in reality only a dynasty, a government and an army. . . . Such an organism being simply a military organism, war is for her the most natural thing possible. If during the second half of the nineteenth century Austria has been relatively less warlike, it is because she had been too often and too regularly beaten in the previous period. But the military nature of the Empire could not be changed by a long period of peace due to weakness." And in recent years, since she has felt herself backed by the might of Germany, this essential militarism of a state in which there is no bond of unity except common subjection has again had free play. The new aggressive rôle of the Habsburg monarchy—or rather the old rôle revived —began in 1878; but has been most manifest since 1908. It is impossible to exaggerate the high-handed brutality, the dishonesty, the cynicism of the policy which has been pursued by the Austrian monarchy since the accession of Count Aehrenthal to power in 1907. Most manifestly it has been a

policy which has been deliberately and recklessly heading straight towards war. And its inspiration (apart from the fundamentally militarist character of the monarchy) has been the form which the national spirit has taken among the Magyars, who saw their ascendancy threatened by the discontent of their Slavonic subjects, and counted upon securing their hated dominion by means of a war in which Russia, the protector of the Slavs, should be made powerless, and Serbia, whose independence formed a constant spur to Slavonic ambitions, should be conquered. Nationalism in its worst and most chauvinistic form, militarism naked and unashamed, have been the dominant factors in Austrian policy. They have made it impossible for Austria to dream of taking her place in the family of peaceful European states. They have made her one of the principal sources of unrest during all these years. But they have only been able to exercise this influence because Austria was conscious that behind her stood the grim Destructive Sword of Germany.

For it is to Germany that we come in the end as the final, implacable foe of the international idea. In Germany, to a degree unparalleled in any other state at any period of modern history, the three hateful factors of distorted nationalism, diseased commercialism, and tumid militarism have been simultaneously at work to produce the most terrible of national tragedies, the most appalling of world disasters.

The national spirit in Germany was defiled and vulgarised by the noxious doctrine of the inherent superiority of the Teutonic race. It was distorted

(among a bookish people) by the memory of the mediæval period when the German kings claimed to be emperors of Christendom. It was poisoned by the brutal methods in which the modern unity of Germany was established. The tradition of the mediæval German leadership of Europe combined with the doctrine of race-superiority to establish the theory that it was Germany's destiny once more to control and dominate the civilised world. The methods of Bismarck and Frederick the Great showed how this dominion was to be achieved. One war (1866) had given to Prussia the mastery of Germany; a second war (1870) had given to Germany the hegemony of Europe. Ever since the conclusion of that struggle, the intoxicated pride of the national spirit had anticipated, with more and more definiteness, the necessity of fighting a third and greater war, which should give to Germany the mastery of the world. No nation has ever been so intoxicated with the pride of its own greatness and the conviction of its power and worthiness to control the world as Germany has been since 1870. This frenzied nationalism got its expression in the brutal and extravagant claims and programmes of the Pan-German League, which seemed to the rest of the world so insane that few took them seriously. The national spirit in Germany has been intolerant and contemptuous of the rights of all other nationalities, and for that reason it has been inconsistent with the very idea of an international amity.

Again, the commercial spirit in Germany has assumed a form extremely dangerous to the peace of Europe. The amazing commercial advance of

Germany during the last forty years has of course been due, in the first instance, to the steady industry and ability of the people, their aptitude for organisation, and their respect for science. But it has been due also in part to the remarkable way in which it has been organised on a national basis and for national ends. German commerce has not aimed merely at winning wealth or prosperity: it has aimed always and essentially at dominion. Trade has been pursued not merely for the sake of monetary profits, but as a means to the establishment of German ascendancy in the world. To destroy or undermine the chief competing industries of other countries seems to have been a large part of the aim of the powerful Kartels which have in recent years controlled the chief German industries; and they have been willing to carry on their trade, in market after market, and for year after year, at a heavy loss, in order to attain this end. They have been assisted by the daring and reckless methods of finance pursued by the German banks. They have kept continually speeding up their production, always producing more than the immediate demand justified, employing the surplus production as a means of ruining their competitors in one market after another by selling under cost price, and trusting to the eventual profit of a monopoly control. It is a kind of pitiless and insatiable trade-war which they have pursued; a process only possible by reason of the elaborate organisation on a national scale of all the chief industries, and of the whole banking system of the country. These methods meant ruin and disaster unless they were successful

in winning an ever-increasing mastery over ever new markets. The necessity for getting monopoly control over new markets became a necessity of life and death. If they could not be secured by the unscrupulous methods of organised dumping, before these methods brought the bankruptcy which was their logical result, they must be secured by force of arms. Such a commercial policy—the like of which has never been known in history before—was a perpetual menace to the peace of Europe. It brought the men of commerce into line with the militarists and the Pan-Germans in their willingness to embark on desperate political ventures. It had no small share in producing the alarms of the last ten years ; it largely influenced, for example, the German policy in the Balkans and in Morocco. There seems some reason to believe that during the last few years the directors of German trade-policy have known that this frenzied system of finance was coming perilously near to collapse, and that (so far as concerned the German commercial world) the war of 1914 was a reckless venture undertaken in the hope of avoiding ruin. From this point of view some of the German anticipations of the results of victory have been very instructive. All Central and South-Eastern Europe was to be turned into a single vast union under German control, with a high tariff against the trade of other nations : that is to say, the area of the monopoly-market which forms the basis for the commercial conquest of the world, was to be doubled or trebled. At the same time the rival Powers were to be forced to give special advantages in their markets to German trade.

Whether such a programme was definitely entertained or not, it seems to be undeniable that commerce, elsewhere a factor making for peace, was in Germany a factor favourable, ultimately, to war.

But it was the dominance of the militarist spirit in Germany that formed the greatest peril to the peace of Europe, and the greatest obstacle to the advance of the international idea. The whole history of the Prussian state has been one long expression of the militarist spirit in action ; it was by brute force alone, combined with a total disregard of all moral restraints, that Prussia was created ; and in all the records of history there is not to be found another such seeming proof[1] of the view that political greatness can be created and permanently maintained by brute force alone. When Prussia, by her old and oft-tried methods, had succeeded in uniting Germany, the doctrine of Force, implicit in the Prussian tradition, conquered the soul of Germany, disillusioned by the failure of idealist and liberal methods in 1848. At first the Prussian methods were disliked and resisted by the bulk of the German people, and Bismarck had to carry on his work, especially from 1862 to 1866, in the teeth of bitter opposition. But the dazzling nature of his successes brought complete conversion, and ever since 1866 the rest of Germany has become every year more penetrated with the spirit of Prussia, which is the spirit of militarism.

This conversion was made all the easier because

[1] Only a 'seeming' proof; because the achievements of Prussia have only been lasting in so far as they tended towards the unification of Germany—that is to say, in so far as they had some basis of justice.

the governing classes of Prussia, its Junkers and its bureaucrats, assimilated the governing classes of the rest of the German Empire, and because they very boldly used the power of the state to complete the process. Not only did the Prussianised army shape the thought of German manhood: the educational system was systematically used as a means of indoctrinating even the tenderest youth with the elements of the Prussian gospel, with the glorification of naked brute force, and with the blatant theories of racial superiority. The Universities also were captured. The whole brood of professors, more especially the professors of History, became advocates and mouthpieces of the new gospel, and found that professional advancement was easier for those who did so. The practice of Prussia was developed by the Prussian school of historians into a political doctrine, which was simply the doctrine of militarism.

Of this doctrine Treitschke was the greatest exponent, and his lectures on *Politik* became the very Bible of German statecraft. According to this theory, the essence of the state, and its *raison d'être*, is not justice, but Power; and the expansion of its Power is its "highest moral obligation." The state is the highest thing in the world. It is the source and creator of right and wrong. Moral restraints do not exist for it, except in so far as self-interest may dictate them. No power on earth has any right to impose restrictions upon the action of the state. There is no such thing as international morality, because morality cannot exist apart from the Power that enforces it, and there is no Power

outside of the state. International Law is a figment, except in so far as equal states may find it to their convenience to agree to certain general rules of action; but each state has the right to judge for itself how far it will observe these rules. Any kind of international authority is unthinkable, as a derogation from the omnipotence of the state; and the idea of an international tribunal arbitrating between rival states is intolerable. The only way of settling differences between states is War, which is the highest form of state action, and the noblest. War is the divinely appointed medicine for humanity, by whose decision alone the worthy state can prove its superiority to the unworthy, and progress be made possible. No state is worthy of respect which is not primarily organised for war, and it is only the states that thus prove their virility which are capable of achieving any valuable civilisation. It is the duty of the state to seize every favourable opportunity of making war for the extension of its own power. In this continual conflict, which is the law of nature, weak states must go to the wall: it is their destiny to be conquered and ruled by their stronger neighbours, for that is a law of Nature. Note the contrast between this conception of the Law of Nature and that which was borrowed from Roman jurisprudence by Grotius and the other founders of International Law. According to them, the Law of Nature was that universal moral code which is obligatory upon all men just because they are men, and which is obligatory also upon states because they are human institutions. But these notions belonged to the effete civilisation of the

Latins: the heroic Germans were emancipated from such superstitions; the Nature whose Law they took to their hearts was Nature "red in tooth and claw," and unrestrained by moral sanctions. Such is the doctrine of Militarism, as it has been preached by the spectacled professors of modern Germany.

Treitschke did not expound these doctrines with quite the unqualified directness with which they are here set forth. He surrounded them with explanations and qualifications, he wrapped them up in phrases, so that the casual reader of his *Politik* may be surprised by its apparent moderation. But there is nothing in the foregoing paragraph which is not to be found explicitly or implicitly in the *Politik*; and these doctrines form the real heart of its teaching. The extraordinary ascendancy which Treitschke exercised over the governing classes of Germany and the readiness with which his doctrines were accepted, were due to the fact that he put into cogent and clear form what seemed to be the lesson of Prussian history: he turned Prussianism from a practice into a plausible creed, and the soil was very ready to receive the seed. That is why his most brutal sentences are quoted by such writers as Bernhardi with the same sort of veneration, the same sort of conviction of their absolute finality, with which controversialists used to quote texts from the Bible. And that is why, since Treitschke's death, there has been no lack of lesser but often more violent exponents of the doctrines of militarism in Germany. It is the creed of the governing elements of the nation, because it is the creed that

seems to be enforced by the whole experience of German history, from the Great Elector to Bismarck.

But could any doctrine be more inconsistent with the dream of peace and of international brotherhood? Inspired by this body of ideas, intoxicated by national megalomania, and launched upon a career of commercial conquest that led, as its natural issue, to a great war for the monopoly of world-markets, modern Germany has naturally had no sympathy at all with the international idea whose progress we have traced, but has been its steadiest contemner and opponent.

Her representatives have sat in the Concert of Europe, and have even used it for the maintenance of peace when they were not ready for war; but their methods of discussion have been those characteristic of the conscious lords of creation convinced that the day must come when they will not need to argue or discuss, but will issue their commands. They have come to the council-table of the nations clad in Shining Armour, hammering the table with their Mailed Fists, and clamouring that "the Will of Germany must be respected." In face of the insolent and domineering methods of German diplomacy, with its constant veiled threats of force, the maintenance of the Concert has been extraordinarily difficult, and it has only been kept alive by the patience and forbearance of the Powers.

Germany has accepted the regulations of International Law, and attached her signature to the Conventions of The Hague. But international law consists, according to the German doctrine, of agreements which the state need only observe so long as it

suits its convenience : and we have seen with what freedom Germany has availed herself of the licence given to her in this respect by her prophet Treitschke. Every inconvenient provision of The Hague has been entirely swept aside ; and international law has gone by the board. It has, indeed, in the meanwhile served a useful purpose, by blinding the opponents of Germany. How convenient that there should be an agreement against the use of poison-gas in war time ! It secured to Germany the chance of getting an advantage over her envious rivals who foolishly paid regard to their honour.

For arbitration Germany has nothing but contempt : it is the resort, General Bernhardi tells us, of cowardice or hypocrisy. Yet Germany has signed a few arbitration treaties, contemptuously and with her tongue in her cheek : they could not bind her, and they might prove convenient, as when she proposed to America that the *Lusitania* case should be referred to arbitration.

As for the protection of small states, which seemed to be one of the most striking advances of the nineteenth century, the idea is inconsistent with that text of the gospel according to Treitschke which proves that it is the destiny of small states to be devoured by their great neighbours. Prussia, indeed, pledged her honour to protect Belgium : but that was in 1839, when it was desirable to tie the hands of France. Circumstances alter cases : treaties, says Treitschke, are only valid *rebus sic stantibus*, when the conditions remain unchanged. And in 1914 the conditions were no longer unchanged : the freedom of Belgium stood in the

way of the " highest moral obligation " of Germany, the extension of her power. Yet it was worth while to keep the treaty alive, to confirm and repeat its pledges as late as 1914, because that prevented Belgium from being prepared.

For a generation Europe has been haunted by the dread of the great war which at last has burst upon us. Europe has found herself divided into two rival groups of Powers, each armed to the teeth, and straining all their resources to increase their armaments. Why should this have happened at a period when, as our narrative has demonstrated, the world was advancing towards international co-operation with a readiness never before witnessed ? It was solely because in the midst of Europe there stood a formidable state governed by the conceptions we have analysed, and giving to these conceptions the most open expression, both in the writings of her publicists and in the manners of her diplomats. The division of Europe into rival alliances began with the formation of the Triple Alliance, organised by Germany to secure her hegemony in Europe. She has whined and blustered because a rival but weaker league was brought into existence by the other Powers, in self-defence, and when first France and then Russia removed their old-standing differences with Britain, she bayed to the moon her complaint that there was a plot to ' encircle ' her. No doubt she would have preferred that she should have remained at the head of the only organised alliance in Europe, and that the other Powers should continue to be on bad terms with one another, for this state of things enabled

her to dominate Europe. No doubt she would have been willing to maintain peace on these conditions. But there is something pitiful in the wailings of this formidable Power at the wickedness of other states in uniting themselves for self-defence, or even in removing their causes of quarrel. It is Germany alone that is to blame for the division of Europe into rival groups of power. She herself created the Triple Alliance, and her use of her dominating position after 1890 brought the rival league inevitably into existence. Still more manifest is Germany's responsibility for the steadily increasing burden of armaments. It was her refusal to discuss the matter that made the deliberations of the Hague Conference of 1899 fruitless. And when Britain tried every device to persuade her to retard the suicidal rivalry in naval construction, going so far as even to imperil her own position in order to prove her good faith, the German reply was to double and redouble their programme of construction.

Thus in every way, and at every point, Germany has been the supreme obstacle in the way of international co-operation and organised peace. If her government and her people had not been dominated by the immoral doctrines of militarism which we have tried to analyse ; and if there had not survived from an earlier age the two anti-national and militarist Empires of Austria and Turkey to form her natural allies, the progress of the international idea would assuredly have been vastly more rapid and more effective than it has been.

And now the very idea of internationalism, the ideal of peaceful co-operation between independent

states of which good Europeans have dreamed for three centuries, the fabric of international law, the system of arbitration, are all simultaneously challenged.

Once and for all it is to be decided whether the doctrine of brute force from which Europe has striven to emancipate herself is to retain its destructive ascendancy; or whether, at last, the Reign of Law shall be established in inter-state relations. One way or the other, this war will decide whether the movement for internationalism is to succeed, or to fail utterly and perhaps irrevocably. In this respect also, the war is the culmination of modern history.

CONCLUSION

ON a eursory retrospeet the history of Europe during the last four eenturies seems to be made up of an almost uninterrupted sueeession of wars, and the brief intervals of peaee appear to be filled with the intrigues of State against State, and with preparations for further wars. Superfieial though it is, this interpretation of the past is often adopted, on the one hand by eynies who believe that in the nature of things brute foree is and always must remain the determining faetor in human affairs, and on the other hand by disillusioned sentimentalists, who have dreamed of the reign of peaee, and are thrown off their balanee when their dream is broken.

As an example of the latter point of view, we may take a few sentenees from an earnest and plaintive little book by Mr. Lowes Diekinson[1]: "In the great and tragie history of Europe there is a turning-point that marks the defeat of the ideal of a world-order, and the definite aeeeptanee of international anarehy. That turning-point is the emergenee of the sovereign State at the end of the fifteenth eentury. . . . From that date onwards international poliey has meant Maehiavellianism. . . . In this long and bloody game, the partners are always ehanging. . . .

[1] "The European Anarchy," pp. 9, 12, 150.

One thing only does not change, the fundamental anarchy. International relations, it is agreed, can only turn upon force. . . . Most men believe . . . that power and wealth are the objects States ought to pursue ; that in pursuing these objects they are bound by no code of right in their relations to one another ; . . . that force is the only rule and the only determinant of their differences, and that the only real question is when and how the appeal to force may most advantageously be made."

What are we to say to these judgments ? If they are true, then the facts which have been set out in the foregoing essays have no meaning or value. Nay more, if they are true, there can be no hope for the future. For if all States equally, and nearly all men, have believed, and acted on the belief, that morality has no place in the relations of States, what chance is there of that sudden miraculous conversion of all rulers and all subjects on which the hopes of the sentimentalist seem to rest ? This little book will indeed have been written in vain if the reader does not feel, at the end of it, that such an interpretation of the course of events is mischievously one-sided, and therefore false ; that the story of modern Europe has *not* been a story of unrelieved anarchy but of steady, if slow, progress towards the establishment of the Reign of Law ; and that the ruling opinion of Western civilisation has *not* held that States are " bound by no code of right in their relations to one another." There have been many wars in the modern age ; but these wars themselves have led to a juster distribution of Europe ; and alongside of them, and in spite of them,

there has been a persistent and not unsuccessful effort towards a better system.

It is not true that all, or even most, of these wars have been due to the immoral aggressions of ambitious princes or States. Their chief cause throughout the four centuries, and above all during the nineteenth, has been the working out of the national principle ; and the aim of the national principle is to define the limits of States not by the accidents of conquest or dynastic inheritance, but by the natural affinities of their citizens. That is an idea peculiar to Europe ; as it had to struggle against the long established "rights" and interests of dynasties it could not reach its achievement without conflict ; and most of the wars of the modern age may be called the birth-throes of the nation-states. The more we reflect upon the advantages which civilisation has derived, and will derive, from the organisation of States on a national basis, the more ready shall we be to admit that the conflicts by which its development was inevitably accompanied were by no means mere fruitless waste of life and wealth. For, in the first place, the system of nation-states enriches the world by ensuring the existence of a happy variety of types within the same civilisation. In the second place, the sense of kinship and of common interest which binds together the citizens of a nation-state ensures a willing and loyal acceptance of the Laws of the State such as other forms of organisation can never hope to obtain. In the third place, the national form of State alone renders possible the development of what we call self-government—the organised co-

operation of the body of free citizens in the management of their common affairs ; for self-government has never been made a reality in the modern world anywhere but in the nation-states.

Even if the working out of the national principle had involved the complete abandonment and defeat of " the ideal of a world-order," it would have been worth while. But it has not involved this abandonment, though it has involved a change in the form of the ideal, and the substitution of the idea of the co-operation of free nations for the idea of a single world-dominion. As we have seen, the organisation of an international system must remain impossible until there is a reasonable assurance that the boundaries of States can be regarded as fairly permanent, which can only be when they depend not upon the accidents of conquest but upon some intelligible principle. The increasing triumph of the national principle promises us this assurance, the lack of which has wrecked every earlier attempt at international organisation, notably that of 1815. It is no mere accident that the progress of the international movement has been more rapid since 1878 than ever before. It has been more rapid because the nationalist movements of the nineteenth century had given a new stability and clearness to the political boundaries of Europe ; for all experience shows that national boundaries, once established, are extraordinarily lasting. Thus the very wars which our sentimentalists bemoan as the evidence of an incurable European anarchy, have, in so far as they have defined the bounds of nation-states, brought nearer the possibility of an international

system. For internationalism is dependent upon nationalism.

But, as we have seen in the essay on internationalism, even during the course of the unending wars of the modern age, there has gone on a steady and persistent attempt to embody in institutions that unity of European civilisation which men have never forgotten; and the considerable degree of success which these efforts have attained forms in itself a demonstration of the falsity of the view that in the belief of Europe States are "bound by no code of right in their relations to one another." On the contrary, a "code of right," that is to say, a system of international law, came into existence, and was accepted by all Europe, very early in the course of the modern age; and this code was expressly based upon the assertion that there are moral laws which are binding upon all men and upon all States. During four centuries of almost unbroken warfare, when the new conception of the nation-state was blindly working itself out, Europe has succeeded in equipping herself not only with a rudimentary system of international law, but with a rudimentary international legislature (the congresses of the nineteenth century), with a rudimentary international executive (the Concert of Europe) and with a rudimentary international judiciary (the Hague Tribunal). And the main motive for this remarkable development has been the growing conviction that the security and freedom of the nation-states, like the security and freedom of individuals in a State, depend upon their being able to put themselves under the guardianship of law. That is to say,

internationalism is necessary as the fulfilment of nationalism. The two are as mutually dependent as Liberty and Law.

This is the view of modern history which we have tried to work out in outline in the foregoing essays. It is a view at once nobler, and, I believe, truer than the blank pessimism of the disillusioned sentimentalist. And if it is a sound view, it ought deeply to affect our attitude both towards the Great War itself, and towards the events that may be expected to follow it.

The War from this point of view is a last desperate struggle of the forces in Europe that are most hostile to the twin causes of nationalism and internationalism. This hostility has been long evident. During all the years of peace Austria and Turkey, and in a less degree Germany, have been the main obstacles to the final victory of the national principle in those regions of Europe where it is as yet unfulfilled; during all the years of peace Austria and Turkey, and in the highest degree Germany, have been the greatest obstacles in the way of the international movement, which was supported by the sympathy of almost every other civilised State. But if our interpretation of the past is a true one, these powers are trying to withstand the main stream of civilisation. Their defeat is certain; and if it be sufficiently complete, the War is likely to prove to be indeed the culmination of modern history. For the civilisation of the West will pass, in that event, out of its third age, which has been the age of the emergence of the nation-states, and into a new age, world-embracing in its scope.

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